This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

813 XL42

To be returned

6 FEB 1950

22 NOV 1950

5 MAR 1952

300150244J

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Susanna Frances May 1802

THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF

OLIVER GOLDSMITH, M.B.

A NEW EDITION, IN FOUR VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

SOME ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

VOLUME IV.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, G. AND J. ROBINSON, W. J. AND J. RICHARDSON, W. OTRIDGE AND SON, F. AND C. RIVINGTON, J. MATTHEWS, J. WALKER, W. LOWNDES, J. SCATCHERD, G. WILKIE, P. M^c QUEEN, LONGMAN AND REES, VERNOR AND HOOD, CADELL, JUN. AND DAVIES, MURRAY AND HIGHLEY, AND E. NEWBERY,

By Nichols and Son, Red Lion Passage, Fleet-street.

1801.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

CONTENTS

OF THE

FOURTH VOLUME.

THE LIFE OF DR. PARNELL . . . . . *page* 1

THE LIFE OF HENRY LORD VISCOUNT BOLINGBROKE. 29

The Preface to Dr. Brookes's Natural Hiſtory. . . . 79

Introduction to a new Hiſtory of the World. 89

The Preface to the Roman Hiſtory. 97

The Preface to the Hiſtory of England. 103

The Preface to an Hiſtory of the Earth, &c. 109

The Preface to the Beauties of Engliſh Poetry. . . . 119

The Preface to a Collection of Poems, &c. 133

Digitized by Google

THE BEE. . . . . page 139

No. I. *Introduction.* 141

On a beautiful Youth ſtruck blind by Lightning. 146

Remarks on our Theatres. . . . . . *ib.*

The Story of Alcander and Septimius. 150

A Letter from a Traveller. 155

Account of Mr. Maupertuis. 157

II. *On Dreſs.* 160

Some Particulars relative to Charles XII. . . 165

Happineſs dependant on Conſtitution. 171

On our Theatres. 175

III. *On the Uſe of Language.* 178

The Hiſtory of Hypoſia. 184

On Juſtice and Generoſity. 189

Some Particulars relative to Father Freijo. . 193

IV. *Miſcellaneous.* 195

A Flemiſh Tradition. 200

The Sagacity of ſome Inſects. 203

The Characteriſtics of Greatneſs. 209

Concluſion of a City Night-piece. 212

V. *Upon Political Frugality.* 213

A Reverie. 224

A Word or Two upon High Life below Stairs. 230

Upon Unfortunate Merit. 232

VI. *On Education.* 236

On the Inſtability of Worldly Grandeur. . . . 248

Some Account of the Academies of Italy. . . . 252

N°

Digitized by Google

No VII. *Of Eloquence*. 255
Cuſtom and Laws compared. 264
On the Pride and Luxury of the Middling Claſs of People. 268
Sabinus and Olinda. 270
The Sentiments of a Frenchman on the Temper of the Engliſh. 273
VIII. *On Deceit and Falſhood*. 277
An Account of the Auguſtan Age of England. 283
Of the Opera in England. 292

Preface to the ESSAYS. 299
I. *Deſcription of various Clubs* 302
II. *Specimen of a Magazine in Miniature*. 311
III. *Aſem, an Eaſtern Tale; or Vindication of the Wiſdom of* PROVIDENCE *in the moral Government of the World*. 315
IV. *On the Engliſh Clergy, and popular Preachers*. 324
V. *A Reverie at the Boar's Head Tavern, Eaſt-Cheap*. 329
VI. *Adventures of a Strolling Player*. 344
VII. *Rules enjoined to be obſerved at a Ruſſian Aſſembly*. 355
VIII. *Biographical Memoir ſuppoſed to be written by the Ordinary of Newgate*. 357

Digitized by Google

IX. *National Concord.* 360
X. *Female Warriors.* 363
XI. *National Prejudices.* 368
XII. *Taste.* 372
XIII. *Cultivation of Taste.* 381
XIV. *Origin of Poetry.* 392
XV. *Poetry diſtinguiſhed from other Writing.* 404
XVI. *Metaphors.* 415
XVII. *Hyperboles.* 434
XVIII. *Verſification.* 438
XIX. *Schools of Muſic, Objections thereto, and Anſwers.* 443
XX. *Carolan the Iriſh Bard.* 449
XXI. *On the Tenants of the Leaſowes.* 452
XXII. *Sentimental Comedy.* 457
XXIII. *Scotch Marriages.* 461
XXIV. *Dignity of Human Nature.* 465

Digitized by Google

THE

LIFE

OF

THOMAS PARNELL, D. D.

ARCHDEACON OF CLOGHER.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1770.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

LIFE

OF

DR. PARNELL.

THE life of a ſcholar ſeldom abounds with adventure. His fame is acquired in ſolitude. And the hiſtorian, who only views him at a diſtance, muſt be content with a dry detail of actions by which he is ſcarcely diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of mankind. But we are fond of talking of thoſe who have given us pleaſure, not that we have any thing important to ſay, but becauſe the ſubject is pleaſing.

THOMAS PARNELL, D. D. was deſcended from an ancient family, that had for ſome centuries been ſettled at Congleton in Cheſhire. His father, Thomas Parnell, who had been attached to the commonwealth party, upon the reſtoration went over to Ireland; thither he carried a large perſonal fortune, which he laid out in lands in that kingdom. The eſtates he purchaſed there, as alſo that of which he was poſſeſſed in Cheſhire, deſcended to our poet, who was his eldeſt ſon, and ſtill remain in the family. Thus want, which has compelled many of our greateſt men into

Digitized by Google

the ſervice of the muſes, had no influence upon Parnell; he was a poet by inclination.

He was born in Dublin, in the year 1679, and received the firſt rudiments of his education at the ſchool of Doctor Jones in that city. Surpriſing things are told us of the greatneſs of his memory at that early period, as of his being able to repeat by heart forty lines of any book at the firſt reading; of his getting the third book of the Iliad in one night's time, which was given in order to confine him for ſome days. Theſe ſtories, which are told of almoſt every celebrated wit, may perhaps be true. But for my own part, I never found any of thoſe prodigies of parts, although I have known enow that were deſirous, among the ignorant, of being thought ſo.

There is one preſumption, however, of the early maturity of his underſtanding. He was admitted a member of the College of Dublin, at the age of thirteen, which is much ſooner than uſual, as at that Univerſity they are a great deal ſtricter in their examination for entrance, than either at Oxford or Cambridge. His progreſs through the college courſe of ſtudy was probably marked with but little ſplendour; his imagination might have been too warm to reliſh the cold logic of Burgerſdicius, or the dreary ſubtleties of Smiglefius; but it is certain, that as a claſſical ſcholar few could equal him. His own compoſitions ſhew this, and the deference which the moſt eminent men of his time paid him upon that head, put it beyond a doubt. He took the degree of Maſter of Arts the ninth of July, 1700; and in the ſame year he was ordained a Deacon, by William biſhop of Derry, having a diſpenſation from the Primate, as being under twenty-three years of age. He was admitted into Prieſt's Orders about three years after, by William archbiſhop of Dublin; and on the ninth of

Digitized by Google

of February, 1705, he was collated by Sir George Aſhe, biſhop of Clogher, to the archdeaconry of Clogher. About that time alſo he married Miſs Anne Minchin, a young lady of great merit and beauty, by whom he had two ſons, who died young, and one daughter, who is ſtill living. His wife died ſome time before him; and her death is ſaid to have made ſo great an impreſſion on his ſpirits, that it ſerved to haſten his own. On the thirty-firſt of May, 1716, he was preſented, by his friend and patron Archbiſhop King, to the vicarage of Finglaſs, a benefice worth about four hundred pounds a year, in the dioceſe of Dublin, but he lived to enjoy his preferment a very ſhort time. He died at Cheſter, in July, 1717, on his way to Ireland, and was buried in Trinity church in that town, without any monument to mark the place of his interment. As he died without male iſſue, his eſtate devolved to his only Nephew, Sir John Parnell, Baronet, whoſe father was younger brother to the Archdeacon, and one of the Juſtices of the King's Bench in Ireland.

Such is the very unpoetical detail of the life of a poet. Some dates, and ſome few facts ſcarcely more intereſting than thoſe that make the ornaments of a country tomb-ſtone, are all that remain of one, whoſe labours now begin to excite univerſal curioſity. A poet, while living, is ſeldom an object ſufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known but to a few, and theſe are generally ſparing in their praiſes. When his fame is increaſed by time, it is then too late to inveſtigate the peculiarities of his diſpoſition; the dews of the morning are paſt, and we vainly try to continue the chace by the meridian ſplendour.

There is ſcarcely any man but might be made the ſubject of a very intereſting and amuſing hiſtory, if the writer, beſides a thorough acquaintance with the

Digitized by Google

character he draws, were able to make those nice distinctions which separate it from all others. The strongest minds have usually the most striking peculiarities, and would consequently afford the richest materials: but in the present instance, from not knowing Doctor Parnell, his peculiarities are gone to the grave with him; and we are obliged to take his character from such as knew but little of him, or who, perhaps, could have given very little information if they had known more.

Parnell, by what I have been able to collect from my father and uncle, who knew him, was the most capable man in the world to make the happiness of those he conversed with, and the least able to secure his own. He wanted that evenness of disposition which bears disappointment with phlegm, and joy with indifference. He was ever very much elated or depressed; and his whole life spent in agony or rapture. But the turbulence of these passions only affected himself, and never those about him: he knew the ridicule of his own character, and very effectually raised the mirth of his companions, as well at his vexations as at his triumphs.

How much his company was desired appears from the extensiveness of his connexions, and the number of his friends. Even before he made any figure in the literary world, his friendship was sought by persons of every rank and party. The wits at that time differed a good deal from those, who are most eminent for their understanding at present. It would now be thought a very indifferent sign of a writer's good sense to disclaim his private friends for happening to be of a different party in politics; but it was then otherwise, the whig wits held the tory wits in great contempt, and these retaliated in their turn. At the head of one party were Addison, Steele, and Congreve; at that of the other, Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot.

Digitized by Google

Arbuthnot. Parnell was a friend to both ſides, and with a liberality becoming a ſcholar, ſcorned all thoſe trifling diſtinctions, that are noiſy for the time, and ridiculous to poſterity. Nor did he emancipate himſelf from theſe without ſome oppoſition from home. Having been the ſon of a commonwealth's man, his tory connexions on this ſide of the water gave his friends in Ireland great offence; they were much enraged to ſee him keep company with Pope, and Swift, and Gay; they blamed his undiſtinguiſhing taſte, and wondered what pleaſure he could find in the converſation of men who approved the treaty of Utrecht, and diſliked the Duke of Marlborough. His converſation is ſaid to have been extremely pleaſing, but in what its peculiar excellence conſiſted is now unknown. The letters which were written to him by his friends, are full of compliments upon his talents as a companion, and his good-nature as a man. I have ſeveral of them now before me. Pope was particularly fond of his company, and ſeems to regret his abſence more than any of the reſt.

A letter from him follows thus:

'DEAR SIR, *London, July* 29.

'I WISH it were not as ungenerous as vain to complain too much of a man that forgets me, but I could expoſtulate with you a whole day upon your inhuman ſilence; I call it inhuman; nor would you think it leſs, if you were truly ſenſible of the uneaſineſs it gives me. Did I know you ſo ill as to think you proud, I would be much leſs concerned than I am able to be, when I know one of the beſt-natured men alive neglects me; and if you know me ſo ill as to think amiſs of me, with regard to my friendſhip for you, you really do not deſerve half the trouble you occaſion me. I need not tell

Digitized by Google

'you, that both Mr. Gay and myſelf have written 'ſeveral letters in vain; and that we were conſtantly 'enquiring, of all who have ſeen Ireland, if they ſaw 'you, and that (forgotten as we are) we are every 'day remembering you in our moſt agreeable hours. 'All this is true; as that we are ſincerely lovers of 'you, and deplorers of your abſence, and that we 'form no wiſh more ardently than that which brings 'you over to us, and places you in your old ſeat be-'tween us. We have lately had ſome diſtant hopes 'of the Dean's deſign to reviſit England; will 'not you accompany him? or is England to loſe 'every thing that has any charms for us, and muſt we 'pray for baniſhment as a benediction?—I have once 'been witneſs of ſome, I hope all of your ſplenetic 'hours: come, and be a comforter in your turn to 'me, in mine. I am in ſuch an unſettled ſtate, that 'I can't tell if I ſhall ever ſee you, unleſs it be this 'year; whether I do or not, be ever aſſured, you have 'as large a ſhare of my thoughts and good wiſhes 'as any man, and as great a portion of gratitude in my 'heart as would enrich a monarch, could he know 'where to find it. I ſhall not die without teſtifying 'ſomething of this nature, and leaving to the world a 'memorial of the friendſhip that has been ſo great a 'pleaſure and pride to me. It would be like writing 'my own epitaph, to acquaint you with what I have 'loſt ſince I ſaw you, what I have done, what I have 'thought, where I have lived, and where I now re-'poſe in obſcurity. My friend Jervas, the bearer 'of this, will inform you of all particulars concerning 'me; and Mr. Ford is charged with a thouſand 'loves, and a thouſand complaints, and a thouſand 'commiſſions to you on my part. They will both 'tax you with the neglect of ſome promiſes which 'were too agreeable to us all to be forgot; if you care 'for any of us tell them ſo, and write ſo to me. I

'can

Digitized by Google

'can ſay no more, but that I love you, and am, in 'ſpite of the longeſt neglect of happineſs,

'DEAR SIR,

'Your moſt faithful affectionate friend,

'and ſervant,

'A. POPE.

'Gay is in Devonſhire, and from thence he goes 'to Bath. My father and mother never fail to com- 'memorate you.'

Among the number of his moſt intimate friends was Lord Oxford, whom Pope has ſo finely complimented upon the delicacy of his choice.

For him thou oft haſt bid the world attend,
Fond to forget the ſtateſman in the friend;
For Swift and him deſpis'd the farce of ſtate,
The ſober follies of the wiſe and great;
Dextrous the craving, fawning crowd to quit,
And pleas'd to 'ſcape from flattery to wit.

Pope himſelf was not only exceſſively fond of his company, but under ſeveral literary obligations to him for his aſſiſtance in the tranſlation of Homer. Gay was obliged to him upon another account; for, being always poor, he was not above receiving from Parnell the copy-money which the latter got for his writings. Several of their letters, now before me, are proofs of this; and as they have never appeared before, it is probable the reader will be much better pleaſed with their idle effuſions, than with any thing I can hammer out for his amuſement.

'*Binfield, near Oakingham, Tueſday.*

'DEAR SIR,

'I BELIEVE the hurry you were in hindered your 'giving me a word by the laſt poſt, ſo that I am yet

Digitized by Google

'to learn whether you got well to town, or continue 'ſo there? I very much fear both for your health 'and your quiet; and no man living can be more 'truly concerned in any thing that touches either 'than myſelf. I would comfort myſelf, however, 'with hoping that your buſineſs may not be unſuc-'ceſsful for your ſake; and that at leaſt it may ſoon 'be put into other proper hands. For my own, I beg 'earneſtly of you to return to us as ſoon as poſſible. 'You know how very much I want you; and that, 'however your buſineſs may depend upon any other, 'my buſineſs depends entirely upon you; and yet ſtill 'I hope you will find your man, even though I loſe 'you the mean while. At this time, the more I love 'you, the more I can ſpare you; which alone will, 'I dare ſay, be a reaſon to you to let me have you 'back the ſooner. The minute I loſt you, Euſta-'thius with nine hundred pages, and nine thouſand 'contractions of the Greek characters, aroſe to view! 'Spondanus, with all his auxiliaries, in number a 'thouſand pages, (value three ſhillings), and Dacier's 'three volumes, Barnes's two, Valterie's three, 'Cuperus, half in Greek, Leo Allatus, three parts 'in Greek, Scaliger, Macrobius, and (worſe than 'them all) Aulus Gellius! all theſe ruſhed upon 'my ſoul at once, and whelmed me under a fit of the 'headach. I curſed them all religiouſly, damn'd 'my beſt friends among the reſt, and even blaſ-'phemed Homer himſelf. Dear ſir, not only as you 'are a friend, and a good-natured man, but as you 'are a chriſtian and a divine, come back ſpeedily, 'and prevent the increaſe of my ſins; for, at the rate 'I have begun to rave, I ſhall not only damn all the 'poets and commentators who have gone before me, 'but be damn'd myſelf by all who come after me. 'To be ſerious; you have not only left me to the laſt

'degree

'degree impatient for your return, who at all times 'ſhould have been ſo (though never ſo much as ſince 'I knew you in beſt health here), but you have 'wrought ſeveral miracles upon our family; you 'have made old people fond of a young and gay per-'ſon, and inveterate papiſts of a clergyman of the 'Church of England; even Nurſe herſelf is in 'danger of being in love in her old age, and (for all 'I know) would even marry Dennis for your ſake, 'becauſe he is your man, and loves his maſter. In 'ſhort, come down forthwith, or give me good rea-'ſons for delaying, though but for a day or two, by 'the next poſt. If I find them juſt, I will come up 'to you, though you know how precious my time is 'at preſent; my hours were never worth ſo much 'money before; but perhaps you are not ſenſible of 'this, who give away your own works. You are a 'generous author; I a hackney ſcribbler; you a 'Grecian, and bred at a Univerſity; I a poor Eng-'liſhman, of my own educating; you a reverend 'parſon, I a wag; in ſhort, you are Dr. Parnelle '(with an *e* at the end of your name) and I

'Your moſt obliged and
'Affectionate friend and
'Faithful ſervant,
'A. POPE.

'My hearty ſervice to the Dean, Dr. Arbuthnot, 'Mr. Ford, and the true genuine ſhepherd, J. Gay, 'of Devon. I expect him down with you.'

We may eaſily perceive by this, that Parnell was not a little neceſſary to Pope in conducting his tranſlation; however, he has worded it ſo ambiguouſly, that it is impoſſible to bring the charge directly againſt him. But he is much more explicit, when he mentions

Digitized by Google

mentions his friend Gay's obligations in another letter, which he takes no pains to conceal.

'DEAR SIR,

'I WRITE to you with the ſame warmth, the ſame 'zeal of good-will and friendſhip with which I uſed 'to converſe with you two years ago, and can't think 'myſelf abſent, when I feel you ſo much at my heart; 'the picture of you, which Jervas brought me over, 'is infinitely leſs lively a repreſentation than that I 'carry about with me, and which riſes to my mind 'whenever I think of you. I have many an agreeable reverie through thoſe woods and downs where 'we once rambled together; my head is ſometimes 'at the Bath, and ſometimes at Letcomb, where the 'Dean makes a great part of my imaginary entertainment, this being the cheapeſt way of treating me; 'I hope he will not be diſpleaſed at this manner of 'paying my reſpects to him, inſtead of following my 'friend Jervas's example, which to ſay the truth, 'I have as much inclination to do as I want ability. 'I have been ever ſince December laſt in greater variety of buſineſs than any ſuch men as you (that is, 'divines and philoſophers) can poſſibly imagine a 'reaſonable creature capable of. Gay's play, among 'the reſt, has coſt much time and long ſuffering, to 'ſtem a tide of malice and party, that certain authors have raiſed againſt it; the beſt revenge upon 'ſuch fellows is now in my hands, I mean your 'Zoilus, which really tranſcends the expectation I 'had conceived of it. I have put it into the preſs, 'beginning with the poem Batrachom: for you ſeem, 'by the firſt paragraph of the dedication to it, to deſign to prefix the name of ſome particular perſon, 'I beg therefore to know for whom you intend it, 'that the publication may not be delayed on this account,

Digitized by Google

'count, and this as ſoon as is poſſible. Inform me 'alſo upon what terms I am to deal with the bookſel-'ler, and whether you deſign the copy-money for 'Gay, as you formerly talked, what number of books 'you would have yourſelf, &c. I ſcarce ſee any 'thing to be altered in this whole piece; in the poems 'you ſent I will take the liberty you allow me: the 'ſtory of Pandora, and the Eclogue upon Health, 'are two of the moſt beautiful things I ever read. 'I do not ſay this to the prejudice of the reſt, but 'as I have read theſe oftner. Let me know how far my 'commiſſion is to extend, and be confident of my 'punctual performance of whatever you enjoin. I 'muſt add a paragraph on this occaſion in regard to 'Mr. Ward, whoſe verſes have been a great pleaſure 'to me; I will contrive they ſhall be ſo to the world, 'whenever I can find a proper opportunity of pub-'liſhing them.

'I ſhall very ſoon print an entire collection of my 'own madrigals, which I look upon as making my 'laſt will and teſtament, ſince in it I ſhall give all I 'ever intend to give, (which I'll beg your's and the 'Dean's acceptance of). You muſt look on me no 'more a poet, but a plain commoner, who lives upon 'his own, and fears and flatters no man. I hope be-'fore I die to diſcharge the debt I owe to Homer, 'and get upon the whole juſt fame enough to ſerve 'for an annuity for my own time, though I leave no-'thing to poſterity.

'I beg our correſpondence may be more frequent 'than it has been of late. I am ſure my eſteem and 'love for you never more deſerved it from you, 'or more prompted it from you. I deſired our friend 'Jervas (in the greateſt hurry of my buſineſs) to ſay 'a great deal in my name, both to yourſelf and 'the Dean, and muſt once more repeat the aſ-

'ſurances

'ſurances to you both, of an unchanging friend-
'ſhip and unalterable eſteem.

'I am, dear Sir, moſt entirely,
'Your affectionate, faithful,
'Obliged friend and ſervant,
'A. POPE.'

From theſe letters to Parnell, we may conclude, as far as their teſtimony can go, that he was an agreeable, a generous, and a ſincere man. Indeed, he took care that his friends ſhould always ſee him to the beſt advantage; for, when he found his fits of ſpleen and uneaſineſs, which ſometimes laſted for weeks together, returning, he returned with all expedition to the remote parts of Ireland, and there made out a gloomy kind of ſatisfaction, in giving hideous deſcriptions of the ſolitude to which he retired. It is ſaid of a famous painter, that, being confined in priſon for debt, his whole delight conſiſted in drawing the faces of his creditors in caricatura. It was juſt ſo with Parnell. From many of his unpubliſhed pieces which I have ſeen, and from others that have appeared, it would ſeem, that ſcarcely a bog in his neighbourhood was left without reproach, and ſcarcely a mountain reared its head unſung. 'I can eaſily,' ſays Pope, in one of his letters, in anſwer to a dreary deſcription of Parnell's, 'I can eaſily image to my 'thoughts the ſolitary hours of your eremitical life in 'the mountains, from ſome parallel to it in my own 'retirement at Binfield:' and in another place, 'We 'are both miſerably enough ſituated, God knows; 'but of the two evils, I think the ſolitudes of the 'South are to be preferred to the deſerts of the Weſt.' In this manner Pope anſwered him in the tone of his own complaints; and theſe deſcriptions of the imagined diſtreſs of his ſituation ſerved to give him a temporary

Digitized by Google

temporary relief: they threw off the blame from himſelf, and laid upon fortune and accident a wretchedneſs of his own creating.

But though this method of quarrelling in his poems with his ſituation ſerved to relieve himſelf, yet it was not eaſily endured by the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, who did not care to confeſs themſelves his fellow-ſufferers. He received many mortifications upon that account among them; for, being naturally fond of company, he could not endure to be without even theirs, which however, among his Engliſh friends, he pretended to deſpiſe. In fact, his conduct, in this particular, was rather ſplenetic than wiſe; he had either loſt the art to engage, or did not employ his ſkill in ſecuring thoſe more permanent, though more humble connexions, and ſacrificed for a month or two in England, a whole year's happineſs by his country fire-ſide at home.

However, what he permitted the world to ſee of his life was elegant and ſplendid; his fortune (for a poet) was very conſiderable, and it may eaſily be ſuppoſed he lived to the very extent of it. The fact is, his expences were greater than his income, and his ſucceſſor found the eſtate ſomewhat impaired at his deceaſe. As ſoon as ever he had collected in his annual revenues, he immediately ſet out for England, to enjoy the company of his deareſt friends, and laugh at the more prudent world that were minding buſineſs and gaining money. The friends to whom, during the latter part of his life, he was chiefly attached, were Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Jervas, and Gay. Among theſe he was particularly happy, his mind was entirely at eaſe, and gave a looſe to every harmleſs folly that came uppermoſt. Indeed, it was a ſociety, in which, of all others, a wiſe man might be moſt fooliſh without incurring any danger or contempt. Perhaps the reader will be pleaſed to ſee a letter to him from a part

Digitized by Google

a part of this junto, as there is ſomething ſtriking even in the levities of genius. It comes from Gay, Jervas, Arbuthnot, and Pope, aſſembled at a chop-houſe near the Exchange, and is as follows:

'MY DEAR SIR,

'I WAS laſt ſummer in Devonſhire, and am this 'winter at Mrs. Bonyer's. In the ſummer I wrote 'a poem, and in the winter I have publiſhed it; 'which I have ſent to you by Dr. Elwood. In the 'ſummer I ate two diſhes of toad-ſtools of my own 'gathering, inſtead of muſhrooms; and in the win-'ter I have been ſick with wine, as I am at this time, 'bleſſed be God for it, as I muſt bleſs God for all 'things. In the ſummer I ſpoke truth to damſels; 'in the winter I told lies to ladies: Now you know 'where I have been, and what I have done. I ſhall 'tell you what I intend to do the enſuing ſummer; 'I propoſe to do the ſame thing I did laſt, which was 'to meet you in any part of England, you would ap-'point; don't let me have two diſappointments. I 'have longed to hear from you, and to that intent I 'teazed you with three or four letters; but, having no 'anſwer, I feared both yours and my letters might 'have miſcarried. I hope my performance will pleaſe 'the Dean, whom I often wiſhed for, and to whom 'I would have often wrote, but for the ſame reaſons 'I neglected writing to you. I hope I need not tell 'you how I love you, and how glad I ſhall be to 'hear from you; which, next to the ſeeing you, 'would be the greateſt ſatisfaction to your moſt af-'fectionate friend and humble ſervant, J. G.

'DEAR MR. ARCHDEACON,

'Though my proportion of this epiſtle ſhould be 'but a ſketch in miniature, yet I take up half this 'page

Digitized by Google

'page, having paid my club with the good com-
'pany both for our dinner of chops and for this paper.
'The poets will give you lively deſcriptions in their
'way; I ſhall only acquaint you with that which is
'directly my province. I have juſt ſet the laſt hand
'to a couplet, for ſo I may call two nymphs in one
'piece. They are Pope's favourites: and though
'few, you will gueſs muſt have coſt me more pains
'than any nymphs can be worth. He has been ſo un-
'reaſonable as to expect that I ſhould have made them
'as beautiful upon canvas, as he has done upon paper.
'If this ſame Mr. P— ſhould omit to write for the
'dear frogs, and the *Pervigilium*, I muſt entreat you
'not to let me languiſh for them, as I have done
'ever ſince they croſſed the ſeas: remember by
'what neglects, &c. we miſſed them when we
'loſt you, and therefore I have not yet forgiven any
'of thoſe triflers that let them eſcape and run thoſe
'hazards. I am going on the old rate, and want
'you and the Dean prodigiouſly, and am in hopes
'of making you a viſit this ſummer, and of hear-
'ing from you both now you are together. For-
'teſcue, I am ſure, will be concerned that he is not
'in Cornhill, to ſet his hand to theſe preſents,
'not only as a witneſs, but as a

'*Serviteur tres humble*

'C. JERVAS.'

'It is ſo great an honour to a poor Scotchman to
'be remembered at this time a-day, eſpecially by an
'inhabitant of the *Glacialis Ierne*, that I take it very
'thankfully, and have, with my good friends, remem-
'bered you at our table in the chop-houſe in Exchange-
'Alley. There wanted nothng to compleat our hap-
'pineſs but your company, and our dear friend
'the Dean's. I am ſure the whole entertainment
'would

Digitized by Google

'would have been to his reliſh. Gay has got ſo 'much money by his Art of Walking the Streets, that 'he is ready to ſet up his equipage: he is juſt going 'to the Bank, to negotiate ſome Exchange bills. 'Mr. Pope delays his ſecond volume of his Homer 'till the martial ſpirit of the rebels is quite quelled, 'it being judged that the firſt part did ſome harm 'that way. Our love again and again to the dear 'Dean. *Fuimus torys*, I can ſay no more.

'ARBUTHNOT.'

'When a man is conſcious that he does no good 'himſelf, the next thing is to cauſe others to do 'ſome. I may claim ſome merit this way, in haſ-'tening this teſtimonial from your friends above-'writing: their love to you indeed wants no ſpur, 'their ink wants no pen, their pen wants no hand, 'their hand wants no heart, and ſo forth, (after the 'manner of Rabelais; which is betwixt ſome mean-'ing and no meaning); and yet it may be ſaid, when 'preſent thought and opportunity is wanting, their 'pens want ink, their hands want pens, their hearts 'want hands, &c. till time, place, and conveniency, 'concur to ſet them writing, as at preſent, a ſociable 'meeting, a good dinner, warm fire, and an eaſy ſitua-'tion do, to the joint labour and pleaſure of this epiſtle.

'Wherein if I ſhould ſay nothing I ſhould ſay 'much (much being included in my love), though 'my love be ſuch, that, if I ſhould ſay much, I 'ſhould yet ſay nothing, it being (as Cowley ſays) 'equally impoſſible either to conceal or to expreſs it.

'If I were to tell you the thing I wiſh above all 'things, it is to ſee you again; the next is to ſee here 'your treatiſe of Zoilus, with the Batrachomuoma-'chia, and the Pervigilium Veneris, both which 'poems are maſter-pieces in ſeveral kinds; and I 'queſtion not the proſe is as excellent in its ſort, as

'the

Digitized by Google

'the Eſſay on Homer. Nothing can be more glo-
'rious to that great Author, than that the ſame
'hand that raiſed his beſt ſtatue, and decked it with
'its old laurels, ſhould alſo hang up the ſcare-crow of
'his miſerable critic, and gibbet up the carcaſe of
'Zoilus, to the terror of the witlings of poſterity.
'More, and much more, upon this and a thouſand
'other ſubjects, will be the matter of my next letter,
'wherein I muſt open all the friend to you. At this
'time I muſt be content with telling you, I am faith-
'fully your moſt affectionate and humble ſervant,

'A. POPE.'

If we regard this letter with a critical eye, we muſt find it indifferent enough; if we conſider it as a mere effuſion of friendſhip, in which every writer contended in affection, it will appear much to the honour of thoſe who wrote it. To be mindful of an abſent friend in the hours of mirth and feaſting, when his company is leaſt wanted, ſhews no ſlight degree of ſincerity. Yet probably there was ſtill another motive for writing thus to him in conjunction. The above-named, together with Swift and Parnell, had ſome time before formed themſelves into a ſociety, called the *Scribblerus Club*, and I ſhould ſuppoſe they commemorated him thus, as being an abſent member.

It is paſt a doubt that they wrote many things in conjunction, and Gay uſually held the pen. And yet I do not remember any productions which were the joint effort of this ſociety, as doing it honour. There is ſomething feeble and quaint in all their attempts, as if company repreſſed thought, and genius wanted ſolitude for its boldeſt and happieſt exertions. Of thoſe productions in which Parnell had a principal ſhare, that of the origin of the Sciences from the Monkies

Digitized by Google

in Ethiopia, is particulaaly mentioned by Pope himſelf, in ſome manuſcript anecdotes which he left behind him. The Life of Homer alſo, prefixed to the tranſlation of the Iliad, is written by Parnell and corrected by Pope; and, as that great poet aſſures us in the ſame place, this correction was not effected without great labour. 'It is ſtill ſtiff,' ſays he, 'and was 'written ſtill ſtiffer: as it is, I verily think it coſt 'me more pains in the correcting, than the writing 'it would have done.' All this may be eaſily credited; for every thing of Parnell's, that has appeared in proſe, is written in a very aukward inelegant manner. It is true, his productions teem with imagination, and ſhew great learning, but they want that eaſe and ſweetneſs for which his poetry is ſo much admired; and the language is alſo ſhamefully incorrect. Yet, though all this muſt be allowed, Pope ſhould have taken care not to leave his errors upon record againſt him, or put it in the power of envy to tax his friend with faults, that do not appear in what he has left to the world. A poet has a right to expect the ſame ſecrecy in his friend as in his confeſſor; the ſins he diſcovers are not divulged for puniſhment but pardon. Indeed, Pope is almoſt inexcuſable in this inſtance, as what he ſeems to condemn in one place, he very much applauds in another. In one of the letters from him to Parnell, above mentioned, he treats the Life of Homer with much greater reſpect, and ſeems to ſay, that the proſe is excellent in its kind. It muſt be confeſſed, however, that he is by no means inconſiſtent; what he ſays in both places may very eaſily be reconciled to truth; but who can defend his candour and his ſincerity?

It would be hard, however, to ſuppoſe that there was no real friendſhip between theſe great men. The benevolence of Parnell's diſpoſition remains unimpeached; and Pope, though ſubject to ſtarts of paſſion

Digitized by Google

ſion and envy, yet never miſſed an opportunity of being truly ſerviceable to him. The commerce between them was carried on to the common intereſt of both. When Pope had a Miſcellany to publiſh, he applied to Parnell for poetical aſſiſtance, and the latter as implicitly ſubmitted to him for correction. Thus they mutually advanced each other's intereſt or fame, and grew ſtronger by conjunction. Nor was Pope the only perſon to whom Parnell had recourſe for aſſiſtance. We learn from Swift's letters to Stella, that he ſubmitted his pieces to all his friends, and readily adopted their alterations. Swift, among the the number, was very uſeful to him in that particular; and care has been taken that the world ſhould not remain ignorant of the obligation.

But in the connexion of wits, intereſt has generally very little ſhare; they have only pleaſure in view, and can ſeldom find it but among each other. The *Scribblerus Club*, when the members were in town, were ſeldom aſunder, and they often made excurſions together into the country, and generally on foot. Swift was uſually the butt of the company, and if a trick was played, he was always the ſufferer. The whole party once agreed to walk down to the houſe of Lord B——, who is ſtill living, and whoſe ſeat is about twelve miles from town. As every one agreed to make the beſt of his way, Swift, who was remarkable for walking, ſoon left the reſt behind him, fully reſolved, upon his arrival, to chuſe the very beſt bed for himſelf, for that was his cuſtom. In the mean time Parnell was determined to prevent his intentions, and taking horſe arrived at Lord B——'s by another way, long before him. Having apprized his lordſhip of Swift's deſign, it was reſolved at any rate to keep him out of the houſe; but how to effect this was the queſtion. Swift never had the ſmall-pox, and was very much afraid of catching it: as

Digitized by Google

ſoon therefore as he appeared ſtriding along at ſome diſtance from the houſe, one of his lordſhip's ſervants was diſpatched, to inform him, that the ſmall-pox was then making great ravages in the family, but that there was a ſummer-houſe with a field-bed at his ſervice, at the end of the garden. There the diſappointed Dean was obliged to retire, and take a cold ſupper that was ſent out to him, while the reſt were feaſting within. However, at laſt they took compaſſion on him; and upon his promiſing never to chuſe the beſt bed again, they permitted him to make one of the company.

There is ſomething ſatisfactory in theſe accounts of the follies of the wife; they give a natural air to the picture, and reconcile us to our own. There have been few poetical ſocieties, more talked of, or productive of a greater variety of whimſical conceits, than this of the Scribblerus Club, but how long it laſted I cannot exactly determine. The whole of Parnell's poetical exiſtence was not of more than eight or ten years continuance; his firſt excurſions to England began about the year 1706, and he died in the year 1718; ſo that it is probable the club began with him, and his death ended the connexion. Indeed, the feſtivity of his converſation, the benevolence of his heart, and the generoſity of his temper, were qualities that might ſerve to cement any ſociety, and that could hardly be replaced when he was taken away. During the two or three laſt years of his life, he was more fond of company than ever, and could ſcarcely bear to be alone. The death of his wife, it is ſaid, was a loſs to him that he was unable to ſupport or recover. From that time he could never venture to court the Muſe in ſolitude, where he was ſure to find the image of her who firſt inſpired his attempts. He began therefore to throw himſelf into every company, and to ſeek from wine, if not relief,

Digitized by Google

relief, at leaſt inſenſibility. Thoſe helps that ſorrow firſt called for aſſiſtance, habit ſoon rendered neceſſary, and he died before his fortieth year, in ſome meaſure a martyr to conjugal fidelity.

Thus in the ſpace of a very few years, Parnell attained a ſhare of fame, equal to what moſt of his contemporaries were a long life in acquiring. He is only to be conſidered as a poet; and the univerſal eſteem in which his poems are held, and the reiterated pleaſure they give in the peruſal, are a ſufficient teſt of their merit. He appears to me to be the laſt of that great ſchool that had modelled itſelf upon the antients, and taught Engliſh poetry to reſemble what the generality of mankind have allowed to excel. A ſtudious and correct obſerver of antiquity, he ſet himſelf to conſider Nature with the lights it lent him; and he found that the more aid he borrowed from the one, the more delightfully he reſembled the other. To copy Nature is a taſk the moſt bungling workman is able to execute; to ſelect ſuch parts as contribute to delight, is reſerved only for thoſe whom accident has bleſt with uncommon talents, or ſuch as have read the antients with indefatigable induſtry. Parnell is ever happy in the ſelection of his images, and ſcrupulouſly careful in the choice of his ſubjects. His productions bear no reſemblance to thoſe tawdry things, which it has for ſome time been the faſhion to admire; in writing which the poet ſits down without any plan, and heaps up ſplendid images without any ſelection; where the reader grows dizzy with praiſe and admiration, and yet ſoon grows weary, he can ſcarcely tell why. Our poet, on the contrary, gives out his beauties with a more ſparing hand; he is ſtill carrying his reader forward, and juſt gives him refreſhment ſufficient to ſupport him to his journey's end. At the end of his courſe the reader regrets that his way has been ſo

Digitized by Google

ſhort, he wonders that it gave him ſo little trouble, and ſo reſolves to go the journey over again.

His poetical language is not leſs correct than his ſubjects are pleaſing. He found it at that period, in which it was brought to its higheſt pitch of refinement; and ever ſince his time it has been gradually debaſing. It is indeed amazing, after what has been done by Dryden, Addiſon, and Pope, to improve and harmonize our native tongue, that their ſucceſſors ſhould have taken ſo much pains to involve it into priſtine barbarity. Theſe miſguided innovators have not been content with reſtoring antiquated words and phraſes, but have indulged themſelves in the moſt licentious tranſpoſitions, and the harſheſt conſtructions, vainly imagining, that the more their writings are unlike proſe, the more they reſemble poetry. They have adopted a language of their own, and call upon mankind for admiration. All thoſe who do not underſtand them are ſilent, and thoſe who make out their meaning are willing to praiſe, to ſhew they underſtand. From theſe follies and affectations the poems of Parnell are entirely free; he has conſidered the language of poetry as the language of life, and conveys the warmeſt thoughts in the ſimpleſt expreſſion.

Parnell has written ſeveral poems beſides theſe publiſhed by Pope, and ſome of them have been made public with very little credit to his reputation. There are ſtill many more that have not yet ſeen the light, in the poſſeſſion of Sir John Parnell his nephew, who from that laudable zeal which he has for his uncle's reputation, will probably be ſlow in publiſhing what he may even ſuſpect will do it injury. Of thoſe, which are uſually inſerted in his works, ſome are indifferent, and ſome moderately good, but the greater part are excellent. A ſlight ſtricture on the moſt ſtriking ſhall conclude this account, which

Digitized by Google

which I have already drawn out to a disproportionate length.

Hesiod, or the Rise of Woman, is a very fine illustration of an hint from Hesiod. It was one of his earliest productions, and first appeared in a miscellany published by Tonson.

Of the three songs that follow, two of them were written upon the lady he afterwards married; they were the genuine dictates of his passion, but are not excellent in their kind.

The Anacreontic, beginning with, "When Spring came on with fresh delight," is taken from a French poet whose name I forget, and, as far as I am able to judge of the French language, is better than the original. The Anacreontic that follows, "Gay Bacchus," &c. is also a translation of a Latin poem, by Aurelius Augurellus, an Italian poet, beginning with,

Invitat olim Bacchus ad cœnam suos
Comum, Jocum, Cupidinem.

Parnell, when he translated it, applied the characters to some of his friends, and as it was written for their entertaiment, it probably gave them more pleasure than it has given the public in the perusal. It seems to have more spirit than the original; but it is extaordinary that it was published as an original and not as a translation. Pope should have acknowledged it, as he knew.

The Fairy Tale is incontestably one of the finest pieces in any language. The old dialect is not perfectly well preserved, but this is a very slight defect, where all the rest is so excellent.

The Pervigilium Veneris (which, by the bye, does not belong to Catullus) is very well versified, and in general all Parnell's translations are excellent. The battle of the Frogs and Mice, which follows, is done

Digitized by Google

as well as the ſubject would admit; but there is a defect in the tranſlation, which ſinks it below the original, and which it was impoſſible to remedy: I mean the names of the combatants, which in the Greek bear a ridiculous alluſion to their natures, have no force to the Engliſh reader. A bacon-eater was a good name for a mouſe, and Pternotractas in Greek was a very good ſounding word, that conveyed that meaning. Puff-cheek would ſound odiouſly as a name for a frog, and yet Phyſignathos does admirably well in the original.

The letter to Mr. Pope is one of the fineſt compliments that ever was paid to any poet; the deſcription of his ſituation at the end of it is very fine, but far from being true. That part of it where he deplores his being far from wit and learning, as being far from Pope, gave particular offence to his friends at home. Mr. Coote, a gentleman in his neighbourhood, who thought that he himſelf had wit, was very much diſpleaſed with Parnell for caſting his eyes ſo far off for a learned friend, when he could ſo conveniently be ſupplied at home.

The tranſlation of a part of the Rape of the Lock into monkiſh verſe ſerves to ſhew what a maſter Parnell was of the Latin; a copy of verſes made in this manner, is one of the moſt difficult trifles that can poſſibly be imagined. I am aſſured that it was written upon the following occaſion. Before the Rape of the Lock was yet completed, Pope was reading it to his friend Swift, who ſat very attentively, while Parnell, who happened to be in the houſe, went in and out without ſeeming to take any notice. However he was very diligently employed in liſtening, and was able, from the ſtrength of his memory, to bring away the whole deſcription of the Toilet pretty exactly. This he verſified in the manner now publiſhed in his works; and the next day, when Pope was reading

Digitized by Google

reading his poem to ſome friends, Parnell inſiſted that he had ſtolen that part of the deſcription from an old monkiſh manuſcript. An old paper with the Latin verſes was ſoon brought forth, and it was not till after ſome time that Pope was delivered from the confuſion which it at firſt produced.

The Book-worm is another unacknowledged tranſlation from a Latin poem by Beza. It was the faſhion with the wits of the laſt age, to conceal the places whence they took their hints or their ſubjects. A trifling acknowledgement would have made that lawful prize, which may now be conſidered as plunder.

The Night Piece on death deſerves every praiſe, and I ſhould ſuppoſe, with very little amendment, might be made to ſurpaſs all thoſe night pieces and church-yard ſcenes that have ſince appeared. But the poem of Parnell's beſt known, and on which his beſt repuation is grounded, is the Hermit. Pope, ſpeaking of this in thoſe manuſcript anecdotes already quoted, ſays, *That the poem is very good. The ſtory*, continues he, *was written originally in* Spaniſh, *whence probably Howel had tranſlated it into proſe, and inſerted it in one of his letters. Addiſon liked the ſcheme, and was not diſinclined to come into it.* However this may be, Dr. Henry Moore, in his Dialogues, has the very ſame ſtory; and I have been informed by ſome, that it is originally of Arabian invention.

With reſpect to the proſe works of Parnell, I have mentioned them already; his fame is too well grounded for any defects in them to ſhake it. I will only add, that the life of Zoilus, was written at the requeſt of his friends, and deſigned as a ſatire upon Dennis and Theobald, with whom his club had long been at variance. I ſhall end this account with a letter to him from Pope and Gay, in which they endeavour to haſten him to finiſh that production.

'DEAR

Digitized by Google

'DEAR SIR, *London, March* 18.

'I MUST own I have long owed you a letter, but 'you muſt own, you have owed me one a good deal 'longer. Beſides, I have but two people in the 'whole kingdom of Ireland to take care of; the Dean 'and you: but you have ſeveral who complain of 'your neglect in England. Mr. Gay complains, 'Mr. Harcourt complains, Mr. Jervas complains, 'Dr. Arbuthnot complains, my Lord complains; I 'complain. (Take notice of this figure of ite-'ration, when you make your next ſermon). Some 'ſay, you are in deep diſcontent at the new turn of 'affairs; others, that you are ſo much in the arch-'biſhop's good graces, that you will not correſpond 'with any that have ſeen the laſt miniſtry. Some af-'firm, you have quarrelled with Pope (whoſe friends 'they obſerve daily fall from him on account of his 'ſatirical and comical diſpoſition); others, that you 'are inſinuating yourſelf into the opinion of the inge-'nious Mr. *What-do-ye-call-him*. Some think you 'are preparing your ſermons for the preſs, and others 'that you will transform them into eſſays and moral 'diſcourſes.. But the only excuſe, that I will allow, 'is your attention to the life of Zoilus. The frogs 'already ſeem to croak for their tranſportation to 'England, and are ſenſible how much that Doctor is 'curſed and hated, who introduced their ſpecies into 'your nation; therefore, as you dread the wrath of 'St. Patrick, ſend them hither, and rid the king-'dom of thoſe pernicious and loquacious animals.

'I have at length received your poem out of Mr. 'Addiſon's hands, which ſhall be ſent as ſoon as you 'order it, and in what manner you ſhall appoint. I 'ſhall in the mean time give Mr. Tooke a packet for 'you, conſiſting of divers merry pieces. Mr. Gay's 'new farce, Mr. Burnet's letter to Mr. Pope, Mr.

'Pope's

Digitized by Google

'Pope's Temple of Fame, Mr. Thomas Burnet's 'Grumbler on Mr. Gay, and the biſhop of Ail-'ſbury's Elegy, written either by Mr. Cary or ſome 'other hand.

Mr. Pope is reading a letter, and in the mean time 'I make uſe of the pen to teſtify my uneaſineſs in 'not hearing from you. I find ſucceſs, even in the 'moſt trivial things, raiſes the indignation of ſcrib-'blers: for I, for my What-d'-ye-call-it, could nei-'ther eſcape the fury of Mr. Burnet, or the Ger-'man doctor; then where will rage end, when Ho-'mer is to be tranſlated? Let Zoilus haſten to 'your friend's aſſiſtance, and envious criticiſm ſhall 'be no more. I am in hopes that we may order our 'affairs ſo as to meet this ſummer at the Bath; for 'Mr. Pope and myſelf have thoughts of taking a 'trip thither. You ſhall preach, and we will write 'lampoons; for it is eſteemed as great an honour 'to leave the Bath, for fear of a broken head, as for 'a Terræ Filius of Oxford to be expelled. I have no 'place at court, therefore, that I may not entirely 'be without one every where, ſhew that I have a 'a place in your remembrance;

'Your moſt affectionate,

'Faithful ſervants,

'A. POPE, and J. GAY.

'Homer will be publiſhed in three weeks.'

I cannot finiſh this trifle, without returning my ſincereſt acknowledgements to Sir John Parnell, for the generous aſſiſtance he was pleaſed to give me, in furniſhing me with many materials, when he heard I was about writing the life of his uncle; as alſo to Mr. and Mrs. Hayes, relations of our poet; and to my very good friend Mr. Stevens, who, being an ornament to letters himſelf, is very ready to aſſiſt all the attempts of others.

THE

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

LIFE

OF

HENRY

LORD VISCOUNT

BOLINGBROKE,

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1771.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

LIFE

OF

LORD BOLINGBROKE.

THERE are ſome characters that ſeem formed by Nature to take delight in ſtruggling with oppoſition, and whoſe moſt agreeable hours are paſſed in ſtorms of their own creating. The ſubject of the preſent ſketch was perhaps of all others the moſt indefatigable in raiſing himſelf enemies, to ſhew his power in ſubduing them; and was not leſs employed in improving his ſuperior talents, than in finding objects on which to exerciſe their activity. His life was ſpent in a continual conflict of politics, and as if that was too ſhort for the combat, he has left his memory as a ſubject of laſting contention.

It is indeed no eaſy matter to preſerve an acknowledged impartiality, in talking of a man ſo differently regarded on account of his political, as well as his religious principles. Thoſe, whom his politics may pleaſe, will be ſure to condemn him for his religion; and on the contrary, thoſe moſt ſtrongly attached to his theological opinions, are the moſt likely to decry his politics. On whatever ſide he is regarded, he is ſure to have oppoſers; and this was perhaps what he moſt deſired, having from nature a mind better pleaſed with the ſtruggle than the victory.

Henry St. John, Lord Viſcount Bolingbroke, was born in the year 1672, at Batterſea in Surrey, at a

ſeat

Digitized by Google

ſeat that had been in the poſſeſſion of his anceſtors for ages before. His family was of the firſt rank, equally conſpicuous for its antiquity, dignity, and large poſſeſſions. It is found to trace its original as high as Adam de Port, Baron of Baſing in Hampſhire, before the conqueſt; and in a ſucceſſion of ages to have produced warriors, patriots, and ſtateſmen, ſome of whom were conſpicuous for their loyalty, and others for their defending the rights of the people. His grandfather Sir Walter St. John, of Batterſea, marrying one of the daughters of lord chief juſtice St. John, who as all know was ſtrongly attached to the republican party, Henry, the ſubject of the preſent memoir, was brought up in his family, and conſequently imbibed the firſt principles of his education amongſt the diſſenters. At that time Daniel Burgeſs, a fanatic of a very peculiar kind, being at once poſſeſſed of zeal and humour, and as well known for the archneſs of his conceits as the furious obſtinacy of his principles, was confeſſor in the preſbyterian way to his grandmother, and was appointed to direct our author's firſt ſtudies. Nothing is ſo apt to diſguſt a feeling mind as miſtaken zeal; and perhaps the abſurdity of the firſt lectures he received might have given him that contempt for all religions, which he might have juſtly conceived againſt one. Indeed, no taſk can be more mortifying than what he was condemned to undergo: "I was obliged," ſays he, in one place, "while yet a boy, to read over the "commentaries of Dr. Manton, whoſe pride it was "to have made an hundred and nineteen ſermons, "on the hundred and nineteenth pſalm." Dr. Manton and his ſermons were not likely to prevail much on one, who was, perhaps, the moſt ſharp-ſighted in the world at diſcovering the abſurdities of others, however he might have been guilty of eſtabliſhing many of his own.

But

Digitized by Google

But theſe dreary inſtitutions were of no very long continuance; as ſoon as it was fit to take him out of the hands of the women, he was ſent to Eton ſchool, and removed thence to Chriſt-church college in Oxford. His genius and underſtanding were ſeen and admired in both theſe ſeminaries, but his love of pleaſure had ſo much the aſcendency, that he ſeemed contented rather with the conſciouſneſs of his own great powers, than their exertion. However his friends, and thoſe who knew him moſt intimately, were thoroughly ſenſible of the extent of his mind; and when he left the univerſity, he was conſidered as one who had the faireſt opportunity of making a ſhining figure in active life.

Nature ſeemed not leſs kind to him in her external embelliſhments, than in adorning his mind. With the graces of an handſome perſon, and a face in which dignity was happily blended with ſweetneſs, he had a manner of addreſs that was very engaging. His vivacity was always awake, his apprehenſion was quick, his wit refined, and his memory amazing: his ſubtlety in thinking and reaſoning was profound, and all theſe talents were adorned with an elocution that was irreſiſtible.

To the aſſemblage of ſo many gifts from nature, it was expected that art would ſoon give her finiſhing hand; and that a youth, begun in excellence, would ſoon arrive at perfection: but ſuch is the perverſeneſs of human nature, that an age which ſhould have been employed in the acquiſition of knowledge, was diſſipated in pleaſure, and inſtead of aiming to excel in praiſe-worthy purſuits, Bolingbroke ſeemed more ambitious of being thought the greateſt rake about town. This period might have been compared to that of fermentation in liquors, which grow muddy before they brighten; but it muſt alſo be confeſſed, that thoſe liquors which never ferment are ſeldom

Digitized by Google

clear *. In this ſtate of diſorder he was not without his lucid intervals; and even while he was noted for keeping Miſs Gumley, the moſt expenſive proſtitute in the kingdom, and bearing the greateſt quantity of wine without intoxication, he even then deſpiſed his paltry ambition. "The love of ſtudy, ſays "he, and deſire of knowledge, were what I felt all "my life; and though my genius, unlike the dæmon "of Socrates, whiſpered ſo ſoftly, that very often I "heard him not in the hurry of theſe paſſions with "which I was tranſported, yet ſome calmer hours "there were, and in them I hearkened to him." Theſe ſacred admonitions were indeed very few, ſince his exceſſes are remembered to this very day. I have ſpoken to an old man, who aſſured me that he ſaw him and one of his companions run naked through the Park, in a fit of intoxication; but then it was a time when public decency might be tranſgreſſed with leſs danger than at preſent.

During this period, as all his attachments were to pleaſure, ſo his ſtudies only ſeemed to lean that way. His firſt attempts were in poetry, in which he diſcovers more wit than taſte, more labour than harmony in his verſification. We have a copy of his verſes prefixed to Dryden's Virgil, complimenting the poet, and praiſing his tranſlation. We have another not ſo well known, prefixed to a French work publiſhed in Holland by the Chevalier de St. Hyacinth, intituled, le Chef de Oeuvre d'un Inconnu. This performance is an humorous piece of criticiſm upon a miſerable old ballad; and Bolinbroke's compliment, though written in Engliſh, is printed in Greek characters, ſo that at the firſt glance it may deceive the eye, and be miſtaken for real Greek.

* Our authors appears fond of this figure, for we find it introduced into his Eſſay on Polite Literature. The propriety however, both of the ſimile, and of the poſition it endeavours to illuſtrate, is ably examined in a periodical work, entitled the Philanthrope, publiſhed in London in the year 1797.

There

There are two or three things more of his compoſition, which have appeared ſince his death, but which do honour neither to his parts nor memory.

In this mad career of pleaſure he continued for ſome time; but at length in 1700, when he arrived at the twenty-eighth year of his age, he began to diſlike his method of living, and to find that ſenſual pleaſure alone was not ſufficient to make the happineſs of a reaſonable creature. He therefore made his firſt effort to break from his ſtate of infatuation, by marrying the daughter and coheireſs of Sir Henry Wincheſcomb, a deſcendant from the famous Jack of Newbury, who though but a clothier in the reign of Henry VIII. was able to entertain the king and all his retinue in the moſt ſplendid manner. This lady was poſſeſſed of a fortune exceeding forty thouſand pounds, and was not deficient in mental accompliſhments; but whether he was not yet fully ſatiated with his former pleaſures, or whether her temper was not conformable to his own, it is certain they were far from living happily together. After cohabiting for ſome time together they parted by mutual conſent, both equally diſpleaſed; he complaining of the obſtinacy of her temper; ſhe of the ſhameleſſneſs of his infidelity. A great part of her fortune ſome time after upon his attainder was given her back; but, as her family eſtates were ſettled upon him, he enjoyed them after her death, upon the reverſal of his attainder.

Having taken a reſolution to quit the allurements of pleaſure for the ſtronger attractions of ambition, ſoon after his marriage he procured a ſeat in the houſe of commons, being elected for the borough of Wotton-Baſſet in Wiltſhire, his father having ſerved ſeveral times for the ſame place. Beſides his natural endowments and his large fortune, he had other very conſiderable advantages that gave him weight in the ſenate, and ſeconded his views of preferment. His grandfather Sir Walter St. John was ſtill alive;

Digitized by Google

and that gentleman's intereſt was ſo great in his own county of Wilts, that he repreſented it in two parliaments in a former reign. His father alſo was then the repreſentative for the ſame; and the intereſt of his wife's family in the houſe was very extenſive. Thus Bolingbroke took his ſeat with many accidental helps, but his chief and great reſource lay in his own extenſive abilities.

At that time the whig and the tory parties were ſtrongly oppoſed in the houſe, and pretty nearly balanced. In the latter years of King William the tories, who from every motive were oppoſed to the court, had been gaining popularity, and now began to make a public ſtand againſt their competitors. Robert Harley, afterwards earl of Oxford, a ſtaunch and confirmed tory, was in the year 1700 choſen ſpeaker of the houſe of commons, and was continued in the ſame upon the acceſſion of Queen Anne the year enſuing. Bolingbroke had all along been bred up, as was before obſerved, among the diſſenters, his friends leaned to that perſuaſion, and all his connexions were in the whig intereſt. However, either from principle, or from perceiving the tory party to be then gaining ground, while the whigs were declining, he ſoon changed his connexions, and joined himſelf to Harley, for whom then he had the greateſt eſteem: nor did he bring him his vote alone, but his opinion; which even before the end of his firſt ſeſſion he rendered very conſiderable, the houſe perceiving even in ſo young a ſpeaker the greateſt eloquence, united with the profoundeſt diſcernment. The year following he was again choſen anew for the ſame borough, and perſevered in his former attachments, by which he gained ſuch an authority and influence in the houſe, that it was thought proper to reward his merit; and on the 10th of April 1704, he was appointed ſecretary at war, and of the marines, his friend Harley having a little before been made ſecretary of ſtate.

The

Digitized by Google

The tory party being thus eſtabliſhed in power, it may eaſily be ſuppoſed that every method would be uſed to depreſs the whig intereſt, and to prevent it from riſing; yet ſo much juſtice was done even to merit in an enemy, that the Duke of Marlborough, who might be conſidered as at the head of the oppoſite party, was ſupplied with all the neceſſaries for carrying on the war in Flanders with vigour; and it is remarkable, that the greateſt events of his campaigns, ſuch as the battles of Blenheim and Ramillies, and ſeveral glorious attempts made by the Duke to ſhorten the war by ſome deciſive action, fell out while Bolingbroke was Secretary at War. In fact he was a ſincere admirer of that great General, and avowed it upon all occaſions to the laſt moment of his life: he knew his faults, he admired his virtues, and had the boaſt of being inſtrumental in giving luſtre to thoſe triumphs, by which his own power was in a manner overthrown.

As the affairs of the nation were then in as fluctuating a ſtate as at preſent, Harley, after maintaining the lead for above three years, was in his turn obliged to ſubmit to the whigs, who once more became the prevailing party, and he was compelled to reſign the ſeals. The friendſhip between him and Bolingbroke ſeemed at this time to have been ſincere and diſintereſted; for the latter choſe to follow his fortune, and the next day reſigned his employments in the adminiſtration, following his friend's example, and ſetting an example at once of integrity and moderation. As an inſtance of this, when his coadjutors the tories were for carrying a violent meaſure in the Houſe of Commons, in order to bring the Princeſs Sophia into England, Bolingbroke ſo artfully oppoſed it, that it dropt without a debate. For this his moderation was praiſed, but perhaps at the expence of his ſagacity.

For ſome time the whigs ſeemed to have gained a complete triumph, and upon the election of a new

Digitized by Google

Parliament, in the year 1708, Bolingbroke was not returned. The interval which followed of above two years, he employed in the ſevereſt ſtudy; and this recluſe period he ever after uſed to conſider as the moſt active and ſerviceable of his whole life. But his retirement was ſoon interrupted by the prevailing of his party once more; for the Whig Parliament being diſſolved in the year 1710, he was again choſen, and Harley being made Chancellor, and under-treaſurer of the Exchequer, the important poſt of Secretary of State was given to our author, in which he diſcovered a degree of genius and aſſiduity, that perhaps have never been known to be united in one perſon to the ſame degree.

The Engliſh annals ſcarcely produce a more trying juncture, or that required ſuch various abilities to regulate. He was then placed in a ſphere, where he was obliged to conduct the machine of ſtate, ſtruggling with a thouſand various calamities: a deſperate enraged party, whoſe characteriſtic it has ever been to bear none in power but themſelves; a war conducted by an able general, his profeſſed opponent, and whoſe victories only tended to render him every day more formidable; a foreign enemy, poſſeſſed of endleſs reſources, and ſeeming to gather ſtrength from every defeat; an inſidious alliance, that wanted only to gain the advantage of victory, without contributing to the expences of the combat; a weak declining miſtreſs, that was led by every report, and ſeemed ready to liſten to whatever was ſaid againſt him; ſtill more, a gloomy, indolent, and ſuſpicious colleague, that envied his power, and hated him for his abilities: theſe were a part of the difficulties that Bolingbroke had to ſtruggle with in office, and under which he was to conduct the treaty of peace of Utrecht, which was conſidered as one of the moſt complicated negotiations that hiſtory can afford. But nothing ſeemed too great for his abilities and induſtry; he

Digitized by Google

he ſet himſelf to the undertaking with ſpirit; he began to pave the way to the intended treaty, by making the people diſcontented at the continuance of the war; for this purpoſe he employed himſelf in drawing up accurate computations of the numbers of our own men, and that of foreigners employed in its deſtructive progreſs. He even wrote in the Examiners, and other periodical papers of the times, ſhewing how much of the burden reſted upon England, and how little was ſuſtained by thoſe who falſly boaſted their alliance. By theſe means, and after much debate in the Houſe of Commons, the Queen received a petition from Parliament, ſhewing the hardſhips the allies had put upon England in carrying on this war, and conſequently how neceſſary it was to apply relief to ſo ill-judged a connexion. It may be eaſily ſuppoſed that the Dutch, againſt whom this petition was chiefly levelled, did all that was in their power to oppoſe it; many of the foreign courts alſo, with whom we had any tranſactions, were continually at work to defeat the miniſter's intentions. Memorial was delivered after memorial; the people of England, the Parliament, and all Europe, were made acquainted with the injuſtice and the dangers of ſuch a proceeding: however Bolingbroke went on with ſteadineſs and reſolution; and although the attacks of his enemies at home might have beeen deemed ſufficient to employ his attention, yet he was obliged at the ſame time that he furniſhed materials to the preſs in London, to furniſh inſtructions to all our miniſters and ambaſſadors abroad, who would do nothing but in purſuance of his directions. As an orator in the ſenate he exerted all his eloquence, he ſtated all the great points that were brought before the houſe, he anſwered the objections that were made by the leaders of the oppoſition; and all this with ſuch ſucceſs, that even his enemies, while they oppoſed his power, acknowledged his abilities. Indeed, ſuch were the dif-

Digitized by Google

ficulties he had to encounter, that we find him acknowledging himself some years after, that he never looked back on this great event, passed as it was, without a secret emotion of mind, when he compared the vastness of the undertaking, and the importance of the success, with the means employed to bring it about, and with those which were employed to frustrate his intentions.

While he was thus industriously employed, he was not without the rewards that deserved to follow such abilities, joined to so much assiduity. In July 1712, he was created Baron St. John of Lidyard Tregoze in Wiltshire, and Viscount Bolingbroke; by the last of which titles he is now generally known, and is likely to be talked of by posterity: he was also the same year appointed Lord Lieutenant of the County of Essex. By the titles of Tregoze and Bolingbroke he united the honours of the elder and younger branch of his family; and thus transmitted into one channel the opposing interest of two races, that had been distinguished, one for their loyalty to King Charles I. the other for their attachment to the Parliament that opposed him. It was afterwards his boast, that he steered clear of the extremes for which his ancestors had been distinguished, having kept the spirit of the one, and acknowledged the subordination that distinguished the other.

Bolingbroke, being thus raised very near the summit of power, began to perceive more nearly the defects of him who was placed there. He now began to find that Lord Oxford, whose party he had followed, and whose person he had esteemed, was by no means so able or so industrious as he supposed him to be. He now began from his heart to renounce the friendship which he once had for his coadjutor; he began to imagine him treacherous, mean, indolent, and invidious; he even began to ascribe his own

Digitized by Google

own promotion to Oxford's hatred, and to suppose that he was sent up to the House of Lords, only to render him contemptible. These suspicions were partly true, and partly suggested by Bolingbroke's own ambition; being sensible of his own superior importance and capacity, he could not bear to see another take the lead in public affairs, when he knew they owed their chief success to his own management. Whatever might have been his motives, whether of contempt, hatred, or ambition, it is certain an irreconcileable breach began between these two leaders of their party; their mutual hatred was so great, that even their own common interest, the vigour of their negociations, and the safety of their friends, were entirely sacrificed to it. It was in vain that Swift, who was admitted into their counsels, urged the unreasonable impropriety of their disputes; that, while they were thus at variance within the walls, the enemy were making irreparable breaches without. Bolingbroke's antipathy was so great, that even success would have been hateful to him, if Lord Oxford were to be a partner. He abhorred him to that degree, that he could not bear to be joined with him in any case; and even some time after, when the lives of both were aimed at, he could not think of concerting measures with him for their mutual safety, preferring even death itself to the appearance of a temporary friendship.

Nothing could have been more weak and injudicious than their mutual animosities at this juncture; and it may be asserted with truth, that men, who were unable to suppress or conceal their resentments upon such a trying occasion, were unfit to take the lead in any measures, be their industry or their abilities ever so great. In fact their dissentions were soon found to involve not only them, but their party in utter ruin; their hopes had for some time been declining, the whigs were daily gaining ground, and the

Digitized by Google

the Queen's death ſoon after totally deſtroyed all their ſchemes with their power.

Upon the acceſſion of George I. to the throne, dangers began to threaten the late miniſtry on every ſide; whether they had really intentions of bringing in the Pretender, or whether the whigs made it a a pretext for deſtroying them, is uncertain; but the King very ſoon began to ſhew, that they were to expect neither favour nor mercy at his hands. Upon his landing at Greenwich, when the court came to wait upon him, and Lord Oxford among the number, he ſtudiouſly avoided taking any notice of him, and teſtified his reſentment by the careſſes he beſtowed upon the members of the oppoſite faction. A regency had been ſome time before appointed to govern the kingdom, and Addiſon was made ſecretary. Bolingbroke ſtill maintained his place of ſtate ſecretary, but ſubject to the contempt of the great, and the inſults of the mean. The firſt ſtep taken by them to mortify him, was to order all letters and packets directed to the Secretary of State to be ſent to Mr. Addiſon; ſo that Bolingbroke was in fact removed from his office, that is, the execution of it, in two days after the Queen's death. But this was not the worſt, for his mortifications were continually heightened by the daily humiliation of waiting at the door of the apartment where the regency ſat, with a bag in his hand, and being all the time, as it were, expoſed to the inſolence of thoſe, who were tempted by their natural malevolence, or who expected to make their court to thoſe in power by abuſing him.

Upon this ſudden turn of fortune, when the ſeals were taken from him, he went into the country, and having received a meſſage from court, to be preſent when the ſeal was taken from the door of the ſecretary's office, he excuſed himſelf, alleging, that ſo trifling a ceremony might as well be performed by one of

Digitized by Google

of the under ſecretaries but, at the ſame time requeſted the honour of kiſſing the King's hand, to whom he teſtified the utmoſt ſubmiſſion. This requeſt however was rejected with diſdain; the King had been taught to regard him as an enemy, and threw himſelf entirely on the whigs for ſafety and protection.

The new Parliament, moſtly compoſed of whigs, met the 17th of March, and in the King's Speech from the Throne many inflaming hints were given, and many methods of violence chalked out to the two houſes. "The firſt ſteps, (ſays Lord Bolingbroke, "ſpeaking on this occaſion) in both were perfectly "anſwerable; and, to the ſhame of the peerage be "it ſpoken, I ſaw at that time ſeveral Lords concur "to condemn in one general vote all that they had "approved in a former Parliament by many parti-"cular reſolutions. Among ſeveral bloody reſoluti-"ons propoſed and agitated at this time, the reſolu-"tion of impeaching me of high treaſon was taken; "and I took that of leaving England, not in a pa-"nic terror, improved by the artifices of the Duke "of Marlborough, whom I knew even at that time "too well to act by his advice or information in "any caſe, but on ſuch grounds as the proceedings "which ſoon followed ſufficiently juſtified, and ſuch "as I have never repented building upon. Thoſe, "who blamed it in the firſt heat, were ſoon after "obliged to change their language: for what other "reſolution could I take? The method of proſecu-"tion deſigned againſt me would have put me out "of a condition immediately to act for myſelf, or "to ſerve thoſe who were leſs expoſed than me, but "who were however in danger. On the other hand, "how few were there on whoſe aſſiſtance I could de-"pend, or to whom I would even in theſe circum-"ſtances be obliged! The ferment in the nation was "brought

Digitized by Google

"brought up to a conſiderable height; but there was "at that time no reaſon to expect that it could in- "fluence the proceedings in Parliament, in favour of "thoſe who ſhould be accuſed: left to its own move- "ment, it was much more proper to quicken than "ſlacken the proſecutions; and who was there to "guide its motions? The tories, who had been true "to one another to the laſt, were a handful, and no "great vigour could be expected from them: the "whimſicals, diſappointed of the figure which they "hoped to make, began indeed to join their old "friends. One of the principal among them, namely, "the Earl of Angleſea, was ſo very good as to con- "feſs to me, that if the court had called the ſervants "of the late Queen to account, and ſtopped there, "he muſt have conſidered himſelf as a judge, and "acted according to his conſcience on what ſhould "have appeared to him; but that war had been de- "clared to the whole tory party, and that now the "ſtate of things was altered. This diſcourſe needed "no commentary, and proved to me, that I had "never erred in the judgment I made of this ſet of "men. Could I then reſolve to be obliged to them, "or to ſuffer with Oxford? As much as I ſtill was "heated by the diſputes, in which I had been all "my life engaged againſt the whigs, I would ſooner "have choſen to owe my ſecurity to their indulgence, "than to the aſſiſtance of the whimſicals: but I "thought baniſhment, with all her train of evils, "preferable to either."

Such was the miſerable ſituation to which he was reduced upon this occaſion; of all the number of his former flatterers and dependants ſcarcely was one found remaining. Every hour brought freſh reports of his alarming ſituation, and the dangers which threatened him and his party on all ſides. Prior, who had been employed in negociating the treaty of Utrecht,

Digitized by Google

Utrecht, was come over to Dover, and had promiſed to reveal all he knew. The Duke of Marlborough planted his creatures round his Lordſhip, who artfully endeavoured to increaſe the danger; and an impeachment was actually preparing in which he was accuſed of high treaſon. It argued therefore no great degree of timidity in his Lordſhip, to take the firſt opportunity to withdraw from danger, and to ſuffer the firſt boilings of popular animoſity to quench the flame that had been raiſed againſt him: accordingly, having made a gallant ſhew of deſpiſing the machinations againſt him, having appeared in a very unconcerned manner at the play-houſe in Drury-lane, and having beſpoke another play for the night enſuing; having ſubſcribed to a new opera that was to be acted ſome time after, and talked of making an elaborate defence, he went off that ſame night in diſguiſe to Dover, as a ſervant to Le Vigne, a meſſenger belonging to the French King; and there one William Morgan, who had been a Captain in General Hill's regiment of Dragoons, hired a veſſel, and carried him over to Calais, where the Governor attended him in his coach, and carried him to his houſe with all poſſible diſtinction.

The news of Lord Bolingbroke's flight was ſoon known over the whole town; and the next day a letter from him to Lord Lanſdowne was handed about in print, to the following effect.

"My Lord,

"I LEFT the town ſo abruptly, that I had no "time to take leave of you or any of my friends. You "will excuſe me, when you know that I had certain "and repeated informations, from ſome who are in "the ſecret of affairs, that a reſolution was taken, by "thoſe who have power to execute it, to purſue me "to the ſcaffold. My blood was to have been the "cement

Digitized by Google

"cement of a new alliance, nor could my inno-
"cence be any ſecurity, after it had once been de-
"manded from abroad, and reſolved on at home,
"that it was neceſſary to cut me off. Had there been
"the leaſt reaſon to hope for a fair and open trial,
"after having been already prejudged unheard by the
"two houſes of Parliament, I ſhould not have de-
"clined the ſtricteſt examination. I challenge the
"moſt inveterate of my enemies to produce any one
"inſtance of a criminal correſpondence, or the leaſt
"corruption of any part of the adminiſtration in
"which I was concerned. If my zeal for the ho-
"nour and dignity of my Royal Miſtreſs, and the
"true intereſt of my country, have any where tranſ-
"ported me to let ſlip a warm or unguarded expreſ-
"ſion, I hope the moſt favourable interpretation will
"be put upon it. It is a comfort that will remain
"with me in all my misfortunes, that I ſerved her
"Majeſty faithfully, and dutifully, in that eſpeci-
"ally which ſhe had moſt at heart, relieving her
"people from a bloody and expenſive war, and that
"I have alſo been too much an Engliſhman, to ſa-
"crifice the intereſt of my country to any foreign
"ally; and it is for this crime only that I am now
"driven from thence. You ſhall hear more at large
"from me ſhortly." Yours, &c.

No ſooner was it univerſally known that he was retired to France, than his flight was conſtrued into a proof of his guilt; and his enemies accordingly ſet about driving on his impeachment with redoubled alacrity. Mr. afterwards, Sir Robert Walpole, who had ſuffered a good deal by his attachment to the whig intereſt during the former reign, now undertook to bring in and conduct the charge againſt him in the Houſe of Commons. His impeachment conſiſted of ſix articles, which Walpole read to the houſe,

Digitized by Google

houſe, in ſubſtance as follows. Firſt, that whereas the Lord Bolingbroke had aſſured the Dutch Miniſters, that the Queen his miſtreſs would make no peace but in concert with them, yet he had ſent Mr Prior to France that ſame year with propoſals for a treaty of peace with that Monarch, without the conſent of the allies. Secondly, that he adviſed and promoted the making a ſeparate treaty of convention with France, which was ſigned in September. Thirdly, that he diſcloſed to M. Meſnager, the French Miniſter at London, this convention, which was the preliminary inſtructions to her Majeſty's Plenipotentiaries at Utrecht. Fourthly, that her Majeſty's final inſtructions to her Plenipotentiaries were diſcloſed by him to the Abbot Gualtier, who was an Emiſſary of France. Fifthly, that he diſcloſed to the French the manner how Tournay in Flanders might be gained by them. And laſtly, that he adviſed and promoted the yielding up Spain and the Weſt-Indies to the Duke of Anjou, then an enemy to her Majeſty. Theſe were urged by Walpole with great vehemence, and aggravated with all the eloquence of which he was maſter. He challenged any perſon in behalf of the accuſed, and aſſerted, that to vindicate were in a manner to ſhare his guilt. In this univerſal conſternation of the tory party none was for ſome time ſeen to ſtir; but at length General Roſs, who had received favours from his Lordſhip, boldly ſtood up, and ſaid, he wondered that no man more capable was found to appear in defence of the accuſed. However, in attempting to proceed, he heſitated ſo much that he was obliged to ſit down, obſerving, that he would reſerve what he had to ſay to another opportunity. It may eaſily be ſuppoſed, that the whigs found no great difficulty in paſſing the vote for his impeachment through the Houſe of Commons. It was brought into that houſe on the 10th of June 1715, it was

Digitized by Google

was ſent up to the Houſe of Lords on the 6th of Auguſt enſuing, and in conſequence of which he was attainted by them of high treaſon on the 10th of September. Nothing could be more unjuſt than ſuch a ſentence; but juſtice had been drowned in the ſpirit of party.

Bolingbroke, thus finding all hopes cut off at home, began to think of improving his wretched fortune upon the Continent. He had left England with a very ſmall fortune, and his attainder totally cut off all reſources for the future. In this depreſſed ſituation he began to liſten to ſome propoſals which were made by the Pretender, who was then reſiding at Barr, in France, and who was deſirous of admitting Bolingbroke into his ſecret councils. A propoſal of this nature had been made him ſhortly after his arrival at Paris, and before his attainder at home; but, while he had yet any hopes of ſucceeding in England, he abſolutely refuſed, and made the beſt applications his ruined fortune would permit to prevent the extremity of his proſecution.

He had for ſome time waited for an opportunity of determining himſelf, even after he found it vain to think of making his peace at home. He let his Jacobite friends in England know that they had but to command him, and he was ready to venture in their ſervice the little all that remained, as frankly as he had expoſed all that was gone. At length, (ſays he, talking of himſelf) theſe commands came, and were executed in the following manner. The perſon who was ſent to me arrived in the beginning of July 1715, at the place I had retired to in Dauphine. He ſpoke in the name of all his friends whoſe authority could influence me; and he brought word, that Scotland was not only ready to take arms, but under ſome ſort of diſſatisfaction to be withheld from beginning: that in England the people were exaſperated

fated againſt the government to ſuch a degree, that far from wanting to be encouraged, they could not be reſtrained from inſulting it on every occaſion; that the whole tory party was become avowedly Jacobites; that many officers of the army and the majority of the ſoldiers were well affected to the cauſe; that the City of London was ready to riſe, and that the enterprizes for ſeizing of ſeveral places were ripe for execution; in a word that moſt of the principal tories were in concert with the Duke of Ormond: for I had preſſed particularly to be informed whether his Grace acted alone, or, if not, who were his council; and that the others were ſo diſpoſed, that there remained no doubt of their joining as ſoon as the firſt blow ſhould be ſtruck. He added, that my friends were a little ſurpriſed, to obſerve that I lay neuter in ſuch a conjuncture. He repreſented to me the danger I ran, of being prevented by people of all ſides from having the merit of engaging early in this enterprize, and how unaccountable it would be for a man, impeached and attainted under the preſent government, to take no ſhare in bringing about a revolution ſo near at hand and ſo certain. He intreated that I would defer no longer to join the Chevalier, to adviſe and aſſiſt in carrying on his affairs, and to ſolicit and negotiate at the Court of France, where my friends imagined that I ſhould not fail to meet a favourable reception, and whence they made no doubt of receiving aſſiſtance in a ſituation of affairs ſo critical, ſo unexpected, and ſo promiſing. He concluded, by giving me a letter from the Pretender, whom he had ſeen in his way to me, in which I was preſſed to repair without loſs of time to Comercy; and this inſtance was grounded on the meſſage which the bearer of the letter had brought me from England. In the progreſs of the converſation with the meſſenger, he related a number of facts, which ſatisfied me as to the general diſpoſition of the

Digitized by Google

people; but he gave me little ſatisfaction as to the meaſures taken to improve this diſpoſition, for driving the buſineſs on with vigour, if it tended to a revolution, or for ſupporting it to advantage, if it ſpun into a war. When I queſtioned him concerning ſeveral perſons whoſe diſinclination to the government admitted no doubt, and whoſe names, quality, and experience were very eſſential to the ſucceſs of the undertaking; he owned to me that they kept a great reſerve, and did at moſt but encourage others to act by general and dark expreſſions. I received this account and this ſummons ill in my bed; yet, important as the matter was, a few minutes ſerved to determine me. The circumſtances wanting to form a reaſonable inducement to engage did not excuſe me; but the ſmart of a bill of attainder tingled in every vein, and I looked on my party to be under oppreſſion, and to call for my aſſiſtance. Beſides which, I conſidered firſt that I ſhould be certainly informed, when I conferred with the Chevalier, of many particulars unknown to this gentleman; for I did not imagine that the Engliſh could be ſo near to take up arms as he repreſented them to be, on no other foundation than that which he expoſed.

In this manner having for ſome time debated with himſelf, and taken his reſolution, he loſt no time in repairing to the Pretender at Comercy, and took the ſeals of that nominal King, as he had formerly thoſe of his potent miſtreſs. But this was a terrible falling off indeed; and the very firſt converſation he had with this weak projector gave him the moſt unfavourable expectations of future ſucceſs. He talked to me (ſays his Lordſhip) like a man who expected every moment to ſet out for England or Scotland, but who did not very well know for which: and when he entered into the particulars of his affairs, I found, that concerning the former he had nothing

more

Digitized by Google

more circumſtantial or poſitive to go upon, than what I have already related. But the Duke of Ormond had been for ſome time, I cannot ſay how long, engaged with the Chevalier: he had taken the direction of this whole affair, as far as it related to England, upon himſelf, and had received a commiſſion for this purpoſe, which contained the moſt ample powers that could be given. But ſtill, however, all was unſettled, undetermined, and ill-underſtood. The Duke had aſked from France a ſmall body of forces, a ſum of money, and a quantity of ammunition; but to the firſt part of the requeſt he received a flat denial, but was made to hope that ſome arms and ſome ammunition might be given. This was but a very gloomy proſpect; yet hope ſwelled the depreſſed party ſo high, that they talked of nothing leſs than an inſtant and ready revolution. It was their intereſt to be ſecret and induſtrious; but, rendered ſanguine by their paſſions, they made no doubt of ſubverting a government with which they were angry, and gave as great an alarm, as would have been imprudent at the eve of a general inſurrection.

Such was the ſtate of things when Bolingbroke arrived to take up his new office at Comercy; and although he ſaw the deplorable ſtate of the party with which he was embarked, yet he reſolved to give his affairs the beſt complexion he was able, and ſet out for Paris, in order to procure from that court the neceſſary ſuccours for his new maſter's invaſion of England. But his reception and negotiations at Paris were ſtill more unpromiſing than thoſe at Comercy; and nothing but abſolute infatuation ſeemed to dictate every meaſure taken by the party. He there found a multitude of people at work, and every one doing what ſeemed good in his own eyes; no ſubordination, no order, no concert. The Jacobites had wrought one another up to look upon the ſucceſs of

Digitized by Google

the preſent deſigns as infallible: every meeting-houſe which the populace demoliſhed, as he himſelf ſays, every little drunken riot which happened ſerved to confirm them in theſe ſanguine expectations; and there was hardly one among them, who would loſe the air of contributing by his intrigues to the reſtoration, which he took for granted would be brought about in a few weeks. Care and hope, ſays our author very humourouſly, ſate on every buſy Iriſh face; thoſe who could read and write had letters to ſhew; and thoſe who had not arrived to this pitch of erudition had their ſecrets to whiſper. No ſex was excluded from this miniſtry; Fanny Oglethorpe kept her corner in it; and Olive Trant, a woman of the ſame mixed reputation, was the great wheel of this political machine. The ridiculous correſpondence was carried on with England by people of like importance, and who were buſy in ſounding the alarm in the ears of an enemy, whom it was their intereſt to ſurpriſe. By theſe means, as he himſelf continues to inform us, the government of England was put on its guard, ſo that before he came to Paris, what was doing had been diſcovered. The little armament made at Havre de Grace, which furniſhed the only means to the Pretender of landing on the coaſts of Britain, and which had exhauſted the treaſury of St. Germains, was talked of publicly. The Earl of Stair, the Engliſh miniſter at that city, very ſoon diſcovered its deſtination, and all the particulars of the intended invaſion; the names of the perſons from whom ſupplies came, and who were particularly active in the deſign, were whiſpered about at tea-tables and coffee-houſes. In ſhort, what by the indiſcretion of the projectors, what by the private intereſts and ambitious views of the French, the moſt private tranſactions came to light; and ſuch of the more prudent plotters, who ſuppoſed that they had truſted their

Digitized by Google

their heads to the keeeping of one or two friends, were in reality at the mercy of numbers. Into ſuch company, exclaims our noble writer, was I fallen for my ſins. Still, however, he went on, ſteering in the wide ocean without a compaſs, till the death of Lewis XIV. and the arrival of the Duke of Ormond at Paris rendered all his endeavours abortive: yet, notwithſtanding theſe unfavourable circumſtances, he ſtill continued to diſpatch ſeveral meſſages and directions for England, to which he received very evaſive and ambiguous anſwers. Among the number of theſe, he drew up a paper at Chaville, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, Marſhal Berwick, and De Torcy, which was ſent to England juſt before the death of the King of France, repreſenting that France could not anſwer the demands of their memorial, and praying directions what to do. A reply to this came to him through the French Secretary of State, wherein they declared themſelves unable to ſay any thing, till they ſaw what turn affairs would take on the death of the King, which had reached their ears. Upon another occaſion a meſſage coming from Scotland to preſs the Chevalier to haſten their riſing, he diſpatched a meſſenger to London to the Earl of Mar, to tell him that the concurrence of England in the inſurrection, was ardently wiſhed and expected: but, inſtead of that Nobleman's waiting for inſtructions, he had already gone into the highlands, and there actually put himſelf at the head of his clans. After this, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, he diſpatched one Mr. Hamilton, who got all the papers by heart, for fear of a miſcarriage, to their friends in England, to inform them, that though the Chevalier was deſtitute of ſuccour, and all reaſonable hopes of it, yet he would land as they pleaſed in England or Scotland at a minute's warning; and therefore they might riſe immediately after they had

Digitized by Google

ſent diſpatches to him. To this meſſage Mr. Hamilton returned very ſoon with an anſwer given by Lord Lanſdowne, in the name of all the perſons privy to the ſecret, that, ſince affairs grew daily worſe, and would not mend by delay, the malcontents in England had reſolved to declare immediately, and would be ready to join the Duke of Ormond on his landing; adding, that his perſon would be as ſafe in England as in Scotland, and that in every other reſpect it was better he ſhould land in England; that they had uſed their utmoſt endeavours, and hoped the Weſtern countries would be in a good poſture to receive him; and that he ſhould land as near as poſſible to Plymouth. With theſe aſſurances the Duke embarked, though he had heard before of the ſeizure of many of his moſt zealous adherents, of the diſperſion of many more, and the conſternation of all; ſo that upon his arrival at Plymouth, finding nothing in readineſs, he returned to Britany. In theſe circumſtances the Pretender himſelf ſent to have a veſſel got ready for him at Dunkirk, in which he went to Scotland, leaving Lord Bolingbroke all this while at Paris, to try if by any means ſome aſſiſtance might not be procured, without which all hopes of ſucceſs were at an end. It was during his negotiation upon this miſerable proceeding, that he was ſent for by Mrs. Trant (a woman who had for ſome time before ingratiated herſelf with the Regent of France, by ſupplying him with miſtreſſes from England) to a little houſe in the Bois de Boulogne, where ſhe lived with Mademoiſelle Chauſery, an old ſuperannuated waiting-woman belonging to the Regent. By theſe he was acquainted with the meaſures they had taken for the ſervice of the Duke of Ormond; although Bolingbroke, who was actual ſecretary to the negotiation, had never been admitted to a confidence in their ſecrets. He was therefore a little ſurpriſed

Digitized by Google

priſed at finding ſuch mean agents employed without his privity, and very ſoon found them utterly unequal to the taſk. He quickly therefore withdrew himſelf from ſuch wretched auxiliaries, and the Regent himſelf ſeemed pleaſed at his defection.

In the mean time the Pretender ſet ſail from Dunkirk for Scotland; and though Bolingbroke had all along perceived that his cauſe was hopeleſs and his projects ill deſigned; although he had met with nothing but oppoſition and diſappointment in his ſervice; yet he conſidered that this of all others was the time he could not be permitted to relax in the cauſe. He now therefore neglected no means, forgot no argument which his underſtanding could ſuggeſt, in applying to the court of France; but his ſucceſs was not anſwerable to his induſtry. The King of France, not able to furniſh the Pretender with money himſelf, had written ſome time before his death to his grandſon the King of Spain, and had obtained from him a promiſe of forty thouſand crowns. A ſmall part of this ſum had been received by the Queen's Treaſurer at St. Germains, and had been ſent to Scotland, or employed to defray the expences which were daily making on the coaſt; at the ſame time Bolingbroke preſſed the Spaniſh Ambaſſador at Paris, and ſolicited the miniſter at the court of Spain. He took care to have a number of officers picked out of the Iriſh troops which ſerve in France, gave them their routes, and ſent a ſhip to receive and tranſport them to Scotland. Still however the money came in ſo ſlowly, and in ſuch trifling ſums, that it turned to little account; and the officers were on their way to the Pretender. At the ſame time he formed a deſign of engaging French privateers in the expedition, that were to have carried whatever ſhould be neceſſary to ſend to any part of Britain in their firſt voyage, and then to cruize under the Pretender's commiſſion. He had actually agreed for ſome, and

Digitized by Google

had it in his power to have made the ſame bargain with others: Sweden on the one ſide and Scotland on the other could have afforded them retreats; and, if the war had been kept up in any part of the mountains, this armament would have been of the utmoſt advantage. But all his projects and negotiations failed by the Pretender's precipitate return, who was not above ſix weeks in his expedition, and flew out of Scotland even before all had been tried in his defence.

The expedition being in this manner totally defeated, Bolingbroke now began to think that it was his duty as well as his intereſt to ſave the poor remains of the diſappointed party. He never had any great opinion of the Pretender's ſucceſs before he ſet off; but when this adventurer had taken the laſt ſtep which it was in his power to make, our ſecretaty then reſolved to ſuffer neither him, nor the Scotch, to be any longer bubbles of their own credulity, and of the ſcandalous artifices of the French court. In a converſation he had with the Marſhal De Huxelles, he took occaſion to declare, that he would not be the inſtrument of amuſing the Scotch; and ſince he was able to do them no other ſervice, he would at leaſt inform them of what little dependence they might place upon aſſiſtance from France. He added that he would ſend them veſſels, which with thoſe already on the coaſt of Scotland, might ſerve to bring off the Pretender, the Earl of Mar, and as many others as poſſible. The Marſhal approved his reſolution, and adviſed him to execute it as the only thing which was left to do; but in the mean time the Pretender landed at Graveline, and gave orders to ſtop all veſſels bound on his account to Scotland; and Bolingbroke ſaw him the morning after his arrival at St. Germains, and he received him with open arms.

As it was the ſecretary's buſineſs, as ſoon as Bolingbroke heard of his return, he went to acquaint the

Digitized by Google

the French court with it; when it was recommended to him to adviſe the Pretender to proceed to Bar with all poſſible diligence; and in this meaſure Bolingbroke entirely concurred. But the Pretender himſelf was in no ſuch haſte; he had a mind to ſtay ſome time at St. Germains, and in the neighbourhood of Paris, and to have a private meeting with the Regent: he accordingly ſent Bolingbroke to ſolicit this meeting, who exerted all his influence in the negotiation. He wrote and ſpoke to the Marſhal De Huxelles, who anſwered him by word of mouth and by letters, refuſing him by both, and aſſuring him, that the Regent ſaid the things which were aſked were puerilities, and ſwore he would not ſee him. The ſecretary, no ways diſpleaſed with his ill ſucceſs, returned with this anſwer to his maſter, who acquieſced in this determination, and declared he would inſtantly ſet out for Lorrain, at the ſame time aſſuring Bolingbroke of his firm reliance on his integrity.

However, the Pretender, inſtead of taking poſt for Lorrain, as he had promiſed, went to a little houſe in the Bois de Boulogne, where his female miniſters reſided, and there continued for ſeveral days, ſeeing the Spaniſh and Swediſh Miniſters, and even the Regent himſelf. It might have been in theſe interviews that he was ſet againſt his new ſecretary, and taught to believe that he had been remiſs in his duty and falſe to his truſt: be this as it will, a few days after the Duke of Ormond came to ſee Bolingbroke, and, having firſt prepared him for the ſurprize, put into his hands a note directed to the Duke, and a little ſcrip of paper directed to the ſecretary; they were both in the Pretender's hand-writing, and dated as if written by him on his way to Lorrain; but in this Bolingbroke was not to be deceived, who knew the place of his preſent reſidence. In one of theſe papers the Pretender declared that he had no farther

Digitized by Google

farther occaſion for the ſecretary's ſervice; and the other was an order to him to give up the papers in his office; all which, he obſerves, might have been contained in a letter-caſe of a moderate ſize. He gave the Duke the ſeals, and ſome papers which he could readily come at; but for ſome others, in which there were ſeveral inſinuations under the Pretender's own hand, reflecting upon the Duke himſelf, theſe he took care to convey by a ſafe hand, ſince it would have been very improper that the Duke ſhould have ſeen them. As he thus gave up without ſcruple all the papers which remained in his hands, becauſe he was determined never to make uſe of them, ſo he declares he took a ſecret pride in never aſking for thoſe of his own which were in the Pretender's hands; contenting himſelf with making the Duke underſtand, how little need there was to get rid of a man in this manner, who only wanted an opportunity to get rid of the Pretender and his cauſe. In fact, if we ſurvey the meaſures taken on the one ſide, and the abilities of the man on the other, it will not appear any way wonderful that he ſhould be diſguſted with a party, who had neither principle to give a foundation to their hopes, union to advance them, nor abilities to put them in motion.

Bolingbroke, being thus diſmiſſed from the Pretender's ſervice, ſuppoſed that he had got rid of the trouble and the ignominy of ſo mean an employment at the ſame time; but he was miſtaken: he was no ſooner rejected from the office, than articles of impeachment were preferred againſt him, in the ſame manner as he had before been impeached in England, though not with ſuch effectual injury to his perſon and fortune. The articles of his impeachment by the Pretender were branched out into ſeven heads, in which he was accuſed of treachery, incapacity, and neglect. The firſt was, that he was never

Digitized by Google

ver to be found by thoſe who came to him about buſineſs; and if by chance or ſtratagem they got hold of him, he affected being in an hurry, and by putting them off to another time, ſtill avoided giving them any anſwer. The ſecond was, that the Earl of Mar complained by ſix different meſſengers at different times, before the Chevalier came from Dunkirk, of his being in want of arms and ammunition, and prayed a ſpeedy relief; and though the things demanded were in my Lord's power, there was not ſo much as one pound of powder in any of the ſhips, which by his Lordſhip's directions parted from France. Thirdly, the Pretender himſelf after his arrival ſent General Hamilton to inform him, that his want of arms and ammunition was ſuch, that he ſhould be obliged to leave Scotland, unleſs he received ſpeedy relief: yet Lord Bolingbroke amuſed Mr. Hamilton twelve days together, and did not introduce him to any of the French Miniſters, though he was referred to them for a particular account of affairs; or ſo much as communicated his letters to the Queen, or any body elſe. Fourthly, the Count de Caſtel Blanco had for ſeveral months at Havre a conſiderable quantity of arms and ammunition, and did daily aſk his Lordſhip's orders how to diſpoſe of them, but never got any inſtructions. Fifthly, the Pretender's friends at the French court had for ſome time paſt no very good opinion of his Lordſhip's integrity, and a very bad one of his diſcretion. Sixthly, at a time when many merchants in France would have carried privately any quantity of arms and ammunition into Scotland, his Lordſhip deſired a public order for the embarkation, which being a thing not to be granted, is ſaid to have been done in order to urge a denial. Laſtly, the Pretender wrote to his Lordſhip by every occaſion after his arrival in Scotland; and though there were many opportunities of writing

Digitized by Google

writing in return, yet from the time he landed there, to the day he left it, he never received any letter from his Lordſhip. Such were the articles, by a very extraordinary reverſe of fortune, preferred againſt Lord Bolingbroke, in leſs than a year after ſimilar articles were drawn up againſt him by the oppoſite party at home. It is not eaſy to find out what he could have done thus to diſoblige all ſides; but he had learned by this time to make out happineſs from the conſciouſneſs of his own deſigns, and to conſider all the reſt of mankind as uniting in a faction to oppreſs virtue.

But though it was mortifying to be thus rejected on both ſides, yet he was not remiſs in vindicating himſelf from all. Againſt theſe articles of impeachment, therefore, he drew up an elaborate anſwer, in which he vindicates himſelf with great plauſibility. He had long, as he aſſerts wiſhed to leave the Pretender's ſervice, but was entirely at a loſs how to conduct himſelf in ſo difficult a reſignation; but at length, ſays he, the Pretender and his council diſpoſed of things better for me, than could I have done for myſelf. I had reſolved, on his return from Scotland, to follow him till his reſidence ſhould be fixed ſomewhere; after which, having ſerved the tories in this, which I looked upon as their laſt ſtruggle for power, and having continued to act in the Pretender's affairs till the end of the term, for which I embarked with him, I ſhould have eſteemed myſelf to be at liberty, and ſhould, in the civileſt manner I was able, have taken my leave of him. Had we parted thus, I ſhould have remained in a very ſtrange ſituation all the reſt of my life; on one ſide he would have thought that he had a right on any future occaſion to call me out of my retreat, the tories would probably have thought the ſame thing, my reſolution was taken to refuſe them both, and I foreſaw that

Digitized by Google

that both would condemn me: on the other ſide the conſideration of his having kept meaſures with me, joined to that of having once openly declared for him, would have created a point of honour, by which I ſhould have been tied down, not only from ever engaging againſt him, but alſo from making my peace at home. The Pretender cut this Gordian knot aſunder at one blow; he broke the links of that chain which former engagements had faſtened on me, and gave me a right to eſteem myſelf as free from all obligations of keeping meaſures with him, as I ſhould have continued if I had never engaged in his intereſt.

It is not to be ſuppoſed that one ſo very delicate to preſerve his honour, would previouſly have baſely betrayed his employer: a man, conſcious of acting ſo infamous a part, would have undertaken no defence, but let the accuſations, which could not materially affect him, blow over, and wait for the calm that was to ſucceed in tranquillity. He appeals to all the miniſters with whom he tranſacted buſineſs, for the integrity of his proceedings at that juncture; and had he been really guilty, when he oppoſed the miniſtry here after his return, they would not have failed to brand and detect his duplicity. The truth is, that he perhaps was the moſt diſintereſted miniſter at that time in the Pretender's court; as he had ſpent great ſums of his own money in his ſervice, and never would be obliged to him for a farthing, in which caſe he believes that he was ſingle. His integrity is much leſs impeachable on this occaſion than his ambition; for all the ſteps he took may be fairly aſcribed to his diſpleaſure at having the Duke of Ormond and the Earl of Mar treated more confidentially than himſelf. It was his aim always to be foremoſt in every adminiſtration, and he could not bear to act as a ſubaltern in ſo paltry a court as that of the pretender.

At

Digitized by Google

At all periods of his exile he ſtill looked towards home with ſecret regret; and had even taken every opportunity to apply to thoſe in power, either to ſoften his proſecutions, or leſſen the number of his enemies at home. In accepting his office under the Pretender he made it a condition to be at liberty to quit the poſt whenever he ſhould think proper; and being now diſgracefully diſmiſſed, he turned his mind entirely towards making his peace in England, and employing all the unfortunate experience he had acquired to undeceive his tory friends, and to promote the union and quiet of his native country. It was not a little favourable to his hopes, that about this time, though unknown to him, the Earl of Stair, Ambaſſador to the French court, had received full power to treat with him whilſt he was engaged with the Pretender; but yet had never made him any propoſals, which might be conſidered as the groſſeſt outrage. But when the breach with the Pretender was univerſally known, the Earl ſent one Monſieur Saludin, a gentleman of Geneva, to Lord Bolingbroke, to communicate to him his Majeſty King George's favourable diſpoſition to grant him a pardon, and his own earneſt deſire to ſerve him as far as he was able. This was an offer by much too advantageous for Bolingbroke in his wretched circumſtances to refuſe; he embraced it, as became him to do, with all poſſible ſenſe of the King's goodneſs, and of the Ambaſſador's friendſhip. They had frequent conferences ſhortly after upon the ſubject. The turn which the Engliſh miniſtry gave the matter, was to enter into a treaty to reverſe his attainder, and to ſtipulate the conditions on which this act of grace ſhould be granted him; but this method of negotiation he would by no means ſubmit to; the notion of a treaty ſhocked him, and he reſolved never to be reſtored, rather than go that way to work. Accordingly

Digitized by Google

cordingly he opened himſelf without any reſerve to Lord Stair, and told him that he looked upon himſelf obliged in honour and conſcience to undeceive his friends in England, both as to the ſtate of foreign affairs, as to the management of the Jacobite intereſt abroad, and as to the characters of the perſons; in every one of which points he knew them to be moſt groſſly and moſt dangerouſly deluded. He obſerved that the treatment, he had received from the Pretender and his adherents, would juſtify him to the world in doing this; that, if he remained in exile all his life, he might be aſſured that he would never have more to do with the Jacobite cauſe; and that, if he were reſtored, he would give it an effectual blow, in making that apology which the Pretender had put him under a neceſſity of making; that in doing this he flattered himſelf that he ſhould contribute ſomething towards the eſtabliſhment of the King's government, and to the union of his ſubjects. He added that, if the court thought him ſincere in thoſe profeſſions, a treaty with him was unneceſſary; and, if they did not believe ſo, then a treaty would be dangerous to him. The Earl of Stair, who has alſo confirmed this account of Lord Bolingbroke's, in a letter to Mr. Craggs, readily came into his ſentiments on this head, and ſoon after the King approved it upon their repreſentations: he accordingly received a promiſe of pardon from George I. who on the 2d of July 1716 created his father Baron of Batterſea, in the county of Surrey, and Viſcount St. John. This ſeemed preparatory to his own reſtoration; and, inſtead of proſecuting any farther ambitious ſchemes againſt the government, he rather began to turn his mind to philoſophy; and, ſince he could not gratify his ambition to its full extent, he endeavoured to learn the art of deſpiſing it. The variety of diſtreſsful events that had hitherto attended

Digitized by Google

tended all his ſtruggles, at laſt had thrown him into a ſtate of reflection, and this produced, by way of relief, a conſolatio philoſophica, which he wrote the ſame year, under the title of Reflections upon Exile. In this piece, in which he profeſſes to imitate the manner of Seneca, he with ſome wit draws his own picture, and repreſents himſelf as ſuffering perſecution, for having ſerved his country with abilities and integrity. A ſtate of exile thus incurred, he very juſtly ſhews to be rather honourable than diſtreſsful; and indeed there are few men who will deny, that the company of ſtrangers to virtue, is better than the company of enemies to it. Beſides this philoſophical tract, he alſo wrote this year ſeveral letters, in anſwer to the charges laid upon him by the Pretender and his adherents; and the following year he drew up a vindication of his whole conduct with reſpect to the tories, in the form of a letter to Sir William Windham.

Nor was he ſo entirely devoted to the fatigues of buſineſs, but that he gave pleaſure a ſhare in his purſuits. He had never much agreed with the Lady he firſt married, and after a ſhort cohabitation they ſeparated and lived ever after aſunder. She therefore remained in England upon his going into exile, and by proper application to the throne was allowed a ſufficient maintenance to ſupport her with becoming dignity: however ſhe did not long ſurvive his firſt diſgrace; and upon his becoming a widower he began to think of trying his fortune once more, in a ſtate which was at firſt ſo unfavourable. For this purpoſe he caſt his eye on the widow of the Marquis of Villette, and niece to the famous Madam Maintenon; a young lady of great merit and underſtanding, poſſeſſed of a very large fortune, but incumbered with a long and troubleſome law-ſuit. In the company of this very ſenſible woman he paſſed his

Digitized by Google

his time in France, ſometimes in the country, and ſometimes at the capital, till the year 1723, in which, after the breaking up of the parliament, his Majeſty was pleaſed to grant him a pardon as to his perſonal ſafety, but as yet neither reſtoring him to his family inheritance, his title, nor a ſeat in parliament.

To obtain this favour had been the governing principle of his politics for ſome years before; and upon the firſt notice of his good fortune, he prepared to return to his native country, where however his deareſt connexions were either dead, or declared themſelves ſuſpicious of his former conduct in ſupport of their party. It is obſervable that Biſhop Atterbury, who was baniſhed at this time, for a ſuppoſed treaſonable correſpondence in favour of the tories, was ſet on ſhore at Calais, juſt when Lord Bolingbroke arrived there on his return to England. So extraordinary a reverſe of fortune could not fail of ſtrongly affecting that good prelate, who obſerved with ſome emotion, that he perceived himſelf to be exchanged: he preſently left it to his auditors to imagine, whether his country were the loſer or the gainer by ſuch an exchange.

Lord Bolingbroke, upon his return to his native country, began to make very vigorous applications for farther favours from the crown; his pardon, without the means of ſupport, was but an empty, or perhaps it might be called a diſtreſsful, act of kindneſs, as it brought him back among his former friends, in a ſtate of inferiority his pride could not endure. However, his applications were ſoon after ſucceſsful, for in about two years after his return, he obtained an act of parliament to reſtore him to his family inheritance, which amounted to nearly three thouſand pounds a year. He was alſo enabled by the ſame to poſſeſs any purchaſe he ſhould make of any other eſtate in the kingdom; and he accordingly

Digitized by Google

pitched upon a ſeat of Lord Tankerville's, at Dawley, near Uxbridge in Middleſex, where he ſettled with his lady, and laid himſelf out to enjoy the rural pleaſures in perfection, ſince the more glorious ones of ambition were denied him. With this reſolution he began to improve his new purchaſe in a very peculiar ſtyle, giving it all the air of a country farm, and adorning even his hall with all the implements of huſbandry. We have a ſketch of his way of living in this retreat in a letter of Pope's to Swift, who omits no opportunity of repreſenting his lordſhip in the moſt amiable points of view. This letter is dated from Dawley, the country-farm abovementioned, and begins thus, "I now hold the pen "for my Lord Bolingbroke, who is reading your let-"ter between two hay-cocks; but his attention "is ſomewhat diverted, by caſting his eyes on the "clouds, not in the admiration of what you ſay, "but for fear of a ſhower. He is pleaſed with "your placing him in the triumvirate between "yourſelf and me; though he ſays he doubts he "ſhall fare like Lepidus, while one of us runs "away with all the power, like Auguſtus, and ano-"ther with all the pleaſure like Anthony. It is "upon a foreſight of this, that he has fitted up his "farm, and you will agree that this ſcheme of re-"treat is not founded upon weak appearances. Upon "his return from Bath he finds all peccant hu-"mours are purged out of him; and his great tem-"perance and œconomy are ſo ſignal, that the firſt "is fit for my conſtitution, and the latter would en-"able you lay up ſo much money as to buy a bi-"ſhopric in England. As to the return of his health "and vigour, were you here, you might enquire of his "hay-makers; but as to his temperance, I can an-"ſwer that for one whole day we have had nothing "for dinner but mutton broth, beans and bacon,

"and

Digitized by Google

"and a barn door fowl. Now his lordſhip is run "after his cart, I have a moment left to myſelf to "tell you, that I overheard him yeſterday agree "with a painter for two hundred pounds, to paint "his country-hall with rakes, ſpades, prongs, &c. "and other ornaments, merely to countenance his "calling this place a farm." What Pope here ſays of his engagements with a painter was ſhortly after executed; the hall was painted accordingly in black crayons only, ſo that at firſt view it brought to mind the figures often ſeen ſcratched with charcoal, or the ſmoak of a candle, upon the kitchen walls of farm-houſes. The whole however produced a moſt ſtriking effect, and over the door at the entrance into it was this motto: *ſatis beatus ruris honoribus.* His lordſhip ſeemed to be extremely happy in this purſuit of moral tranquillity, and in the exultation of his heart could not fail of communicating his ſatisfactions to his friend Swift. I am in my own farm ſays he, and here I ſhoot ſtrong and tenacious roots: I have caught hold of the earth, to uſe a gardener's phraſe, and neither my enemies nor my friends will find it an eaſy matter to tranſplant me again.

There is not, perhaps, a ſtronger inſtance in the world than his lordſhip, that an ambitious mind can never be fairly ſubdued, but will ſtill ſeek for thoſe gratifications which retirement can never ſupply. All this time he was miſtaken in his paſſion for ſolitude, and ſuppoſed that to be the child of philoſophy, which was only the effect of ſpleen: it was in vain that he attempted to take root in the ſhade of obſcurity; he was originally bred in the glare of public occupation, and he ſecretly once more wiſhed for tranſplantation. He was only a titular lord, he had not been throughly reſtored; and, as he was excluded from a ſeat in the Houſe of Peers, he burned with impatience to play a part in that conſpicuous

Digitized by Google

theatre. Impelled by this desire, he could no longer be restrained in obscurity, but once more entered into the bustle of public business, and disavowing all obligations to the minister, he embarked in the opposition against him, in which he had several powerful coadjutors: but previously he had taken care to prefer a petition to the House of Commons, desiring to be reinstated in his former emoluments and capacities. This petition at first occasioned very warm debates; Walpole, who pretended to espouse his cause, alledged that it was very right to admit him to his inheritance; and when Lord William Pawlet moved for a clause to disqualify him from sitting in either house, Walpole rejected the motion, secretly satisfied with a resolution which had been settled in the cabinet, that he should never more be admitted into any share of power. To this artful method of evading his pretensions Bolingbroke was no stranger; and he was now resolved to shake that power, which thus endeavoured to obstruct the increase of his own: taking therefore his part in the opposition with Pulteney, while the latter engaged to manage the House of Commons, Bolingbroke undertook to enlighten the people: accordingly he soon distinguished himself by a multitude of pieces, written during the latter part of George the First's reign, and likewise the beginning of that which succeeded. These were conceived with great vigour and boldness; and now, once more engaged in the service of his country, though disarmed, gagged, and almost bound, as he declared himself to be, yet he resolved not to abandon his cause, as long as he could depend on the firmness and integrity of those coadjutors, who did not labour under the same disadvantages with himself. His letters in a paper called the Craftsman, were particularly distinguished in this political contest; and though several of the most expert

Digitized by Google

expert politicians of the times joined in this paper, his eſſays were peculiarly reliſhed by the public. However it is the fate of things written to an occaſion, ſeldom to ſurvive that occaſion: the Craftſman, though written with great ſpirit and ſharpneſs, is now almoſt forgotten, although when it was publiſhed as a weekly paper, it ſold much more rapidly than even the Spectator. Beſide this work he publiſhed ſeveral other ſeparate pamphlets, which were afterwards reprinted in the ſecond edition of his works, and which were very popular in their day.

This political warfare continued for ten years, during which time he laboured with great ſtrength and perſeverance, and drew up ſuch a ſyſtem of politics, as ſome have ſuppoſed to be the moſt complete now exiſting. But, as upon all other occaſions, he had the mortification once more to ſee thoſe friends deſert him, upon whoſe aſſiſtance he moſt firmly relied, and all that web of fine ſpun ſpeculation actually deſtroyed at once by the ignorance of ſome and the perfidy of others. He then declared that he was perfectly cured of his patriotic phrenzy; he fell out not only with Pulteney for his ſelfiſh views, but with his old friends the tories, for abandoning their cauſe as deſperate, averring that the faint and unſteady exerciſe of parts on one ſide was a crime but one degree inferior to the iniquitous miſapplication of them on the other. But he could not take leave of a controverſy in which he had been ſo many years engaged, without giving a parting blow, in which he ſeemed to ſummon up all his vigour at once, and where, as the poet ſays,

Animam in vulnere poſuit.

This inimitable piece is intituled, "A Diſſertation on Parties," and of all his maſterly pieces it is in general eſteemed the beſt.

Digitized by Google

Having finiſhed this, which was received with the utmoſt avidity, he reſolved to take leave not only of his enemies and friends, but even of his country; and in this reſolution in the year 1736 he once more retired to France, where he looked to his native country with a mixture of anger and pity, and upon his former profeſſing friends with a ſhare of contempt and indignation. I expect little, ſays he, from the principal actors that tread the ſtage at preſent. They are divided not ſo much as it ſeemed, and as they would have it believed, about meaſures. The true diviſion is about their different ends. Whilſt the miniſter was not hard puſhed, nor the proſpect of ſucceeding to him near, they appeared to have but one end, the reformation of the government. The deſtruction of the miniſter was purſued only as a preliminary, but of eſſential and indiſputable neceſſity, to that end: but when his deſtruction ſeemed to approach, the object of his ſucceſſion interpoſed to the ſight of many, and the reformation of the government was no longer their point of view. They had divided the ſkin, at leaſt in their thought, before they had taken the beaſt. The common fear of haſtening his downfall for others, made them all faint in the chace. It was this, and this alone, that ſaved him, and put off his evil day.

Such were his cooler reflections, after he had laid down his political pen, to employ it in a manner that was much more agreeable to his uſual profeſſions, and his approaching age. He had long employed the few hours he could ſpare, on ſubjects of a more general and important nature to the intereſts of mankind; but as he was frequently interrupted by the alarms of party, he made no great proficiency in his deſign. Still, however, he kept it in view, and he makes frequent mention in his letters to Swift, of his intentions to give metaphyſics

Digitized by Google

phyſics a new and uſeful turn. I know, ſays he, in one of theſe, how little regard you pay to writings of this kind; but I magine, that if you can like any, it muſt be thoſe that ſtrip metaphyſics of all their bombaſt, keep within the ſight of every well conſtituted eye, and never bewilder themſelves, whilſt they pretend to guide the reaſon of others.

Having now arrived at the ſixtieth year of his age, and being bleſſed with a very competent ſhare of fortune, he returned into France, far from the noiſe and hurry of party; for his ſeat at Dawley was too near to devote the reſt of his life to retirement and ſtudy. Upon his going to that country, as it was generally known that diſdain, vexation, and diſappointment had driven him there, many of his friends as well as his enemies ſuppoſed, that he was once again gone over to the Pretender. Among the number who entertained this ſuſpicion was Swift, whom Pope in one of his letters very roundly chides for harbouring ſuch an unjuſt opinion. "You ſhould "be cautious, "ſays he," of cenſuring any motion "or action of Lord Bolingbroke, becauſe you hear it "only from a ſhallow, envious, and malicious re-"porter. What you writ to me about him, I find, "to my great ſcandal, repeated in one of yours to "another. Whatever you might hint to me, was "this for the profane? The thing, if true, ſhould "be concealed; but it is, I aſſure you, abſolutely "untrue in every circumſtance. He has fixed in a "very agreeable retirement, near Fontainbleau, "and makes it his whole buſineſs *vacare litteris*."

This reproof from Pope was not more friendly than it was true; Lord Bolingbroke was too well acquainted with the forlorn ſtate of that party, and the folly of its conductors, once more to embark in their deſperate concerns. He now ſaw that he had gone as far towards reinſtating himſelf in the full poſſeſſion of his former honours, as the mere dint of

Digitized by Google

parts and application could go, and was at length experimentally convinced, that the decree was abſolutely irreverſible, and the door of the Houſe of Lords finally ſhut againſt him. He therefore at Pope's ſuggeſtion retired merely to be at leiſure from the broils of oppoſition, for the calmer pleaſures of philoſophy. Thus the decline of his life, though leſs brilliant, became more amiable, and even his happineſs was improved by age, which had rendered his paſſions more moderate, and his wiſhes more attainable.

But he was far from ſuffering even in ſolitude his hours to glide away in torpid inactivity. That active reſtleſs diſpoſition ſtill continued to actuate his purſuits; and having loſt the ſeaſon for gaining power over his contemporaries, he was now reſolved upon acquiring fame from poſterity. He had not been long in his retreat near Fontainbleau, when he began a courſe of letters on the ſtudy and uſe of hiſtory, for the uſe of a young nobleman. In theſe he does not follow the methods of St. Real and others who have treated on this ſubject, who make hiſtory the great fountain of all knowledge; he very wiſely confines its benefits, and ſuppoſes them rather to conſiſt in deducing general maxims from particular facts, than in illuſtrating maxims by the application of hiſtorical paſſages. In mentioning eccleſiaſtical hiſtory he gives his opinion very freely upon the ſubject of the divine original of the ſacred books, which he ſuppoſes to have no ſuch foundation. This new ſyſtem of thinking, which he had always propagated in converſation, and which he now began to adopt in his more laboured compoſitions, ſeemed no way ſupported either by his acuteneſs or his learning. He began to reflect ſeriouſly on theſe ſubjects too late in life, and to ſuppoſe thoſe objections very new and unanſwerable, which had been already confuted by thouſands. "Lord Bolingbroke," ſays Pope, in

Digitized by Google

in one of his letters, "is above trifling; when he "writes of any thing in this world, he is more than "mortal. If ever he trifles, it muſt be when he "turns divine."

In the mean time, as it was evident that a man of his active ambition, in chuſing retirement when no longer able to lead in public, muſt be liable to ridicule in reſuming a reſigned philoſophical air: in order to obviate the cenſure, he addreſſed a letter to Lord Bathurſt, upon the true uſe of retirement and ſtudy; in which he ſhows himſelf ſtill able and willing to undertake the cauſe of his country, whenever its diſtreſſes ſhould require his exertion. I have, ſays he, renounced neither my country nor my friends; and by friends I mean all thoſe, and thoſe alone, who are ſuch to their country. In their proſperity they ſhall never hear of me; in their diſtreſs always. In that retreat, wherein the remainder of my days ſhall be ſpent, I may be of ſome uſe to them, ſince even thence I may adviſe, exhort, and warn them. Bent upon this purſuit only, and having now exchanged the gay ſtateſman for the grave philoſopher, he ſhone forth with diſtinguiſhed luſtre. His converſation took a different turn from what had been uſual with him; and as we are aſſured by Lord Orrery, who knew him, it united the wiſdom of Socrates, the dignity and eaſe of Pliny, and the wit of Horace.

Yet ſtill amid his reſolutions to turn himſelf from politics, and to give himſelf up entirely to the calls of philoſophy, he could not reſiſt embarking once more in the debates of his country; and coming back from France, ſettled at Batterſea, an old ſeat which was his father's, and had been long in the poſſeſſion of the family. He ſuppoſed he ſaw an impending calamity, and though it was not in his power to remove, he thought it his duty to retard its fall. To redeem or ſave the nation from perdition, he thought

Digitized by Google

thought impoſſible, ſince national corruptions were to be purged by national calamities; but he was reſolved to lend his feeble aſſiſtance, to ſtem the torrent that was pouring in. With this ſpirit he wrote that excellent piece, which is intituled, "The Idea of a Patriot King;" in which he deſcribes a monarch uninfluenced by party, leaning to the ſuggeſtions neither of whigs nor tories, but equally the friend and the father of all. Some time after, in the year 1749, after the concluſion of the peace two years before, the meaſures taken by the adminiſtration ſeemed not to have been repugnant to his notions of political prudence for that juncture; in that year he wrote his laſt production, containing reflections on the then ſtate of the nation, principally with regard to her taxes and debts, and on the cauſes and conſequences of them. This undertaking was left unfiniſhed, for death ſnatched the pen from the hand of the writer.

Having paſſed the latter part of his life in dignity and ſplendour, his rational faculties improved by reflection, and his ambition kept under by diſappointment, his whole aim ſeemed to have been to leave the ſtage of life, on which he had acted ſuch various parts, with applauſe. He had long wiſhed to fetch his laſt breath at Batterſea, the place where he was born; and fortune, that had through life ſeemed to traverſe all his aims, at laſt indulged him in this. He had long been troubled with a cancer in his cheek, by which excruciating diſeaſe he died on the verge of fourſcore years of age. He was conſonant with himſelf to the laſt, and thoſe principles which he had all along avowed, he confirmed with his dying breath, having given orders that none of the clergy ſhould be permitted to trouble him in his lateſt moments.

His body was interred in Batterſea church with thoſe of his anceſtors; and a marble monument erected

Digitized by Google

erected to his memory, with the following excellent inſcription.

Here lies
HENRY ST. JOHN,
In the Reign of Queen Anne
Secretary of War, Secretary of State,
and Viſcount Bolingbroke:
In the Days of King George I. and King
George II.
Something more and better.
His Attachment to Queen Anne
Expoſed him to a long and ſevere Perſecution;
He bore it with firmneſs of Mind;
He paſſed the latter Part of his Time at home,
The Enemy of no national Party;
The Friend of no Faction.
Diſtinguiſhed (under the Cloud of a Proſcription,
Which had not been entirely taken off,)
By Zeal to maintain the Liberty,
And to reſtore the antient Proſperity,
Of Great Britain,
He died the 12th of December, 1751,
Aged 79.

In this manner lived and died Lord Bolingbroke; ever active, never depreſſed, ever purſuing fortune, and as conſtantly diſappointed by her. In whatever light we view his character, we ſhall find him an object rather properer for our wonder, than our imitation, more to be feared than eſteemed, and gaining our admiration without our love. His ambition ever aimed at the ſummit of power, and nothing ſeemed capable of ſatisfying his immoderate deſires, but the liberty of governing all things without a rival. With as much ambition, as great abilities, and more acquired knowledge than Cæſar, he wanted only his courage to be as ſucceſsful; but the ſchemes his head dictated his heart often refuſed to execute; and he

Digitized by Google

he loſt the ability to perform, juſt when the great occaſion called for all his efforts to engage.

The ſame ambition that prompted him to be a politician, actuated him as a philoſopher. His aims were equally great and extenſive in both capacities: unwilling to ſubmit to any in the one, or any authority in the other, he entered the fields of ſcience with a thorough contempt of all that had been eſtabliſhed before him, and ſeemed willing to think every thing wrong, that he might ſhew his faculty in the reformation. It might have been better for his quiet as a man, if he had been content to act a ſubordinate character in the ſtate; and it had certainly been better for his memory as a writer, if he had aimed at doing leſs than he attempted. Wiſdom in morals, like every other art or ſcience, is an accumulation that numbers have contributed to increaſe; and it is not for one ſingle man to pretend, that he can add more to the heap, than the thouſands that have gone before him. Such innovations more frequently retard, than promote knowledge; their maxims are more agreeable to the reader, by having the gloſs of novelty to recommend them, than thoſe which are trite, only becauſe they are true. Such men are therefore followed at firſt with avidity, nor is it till ſome time that their diſciples begin to find their error. They often, though too late, perceive that they have been following a ſpeculative enquiry, while they have been leaving a practical good; and while they have been practiſing the arts of doubting, they have been loſing all firmneſs of principle, which might tend to eſtabliſh the rectitude of their private conduct. As a moraliſt therefore Lord Bolingbroke, by having endeavoured at too much, ſeems to have done nothing: but as a political writer few can equal and none can exceed him. As he was a practical politician,

his

Digitized by Google

his writings are leſs filled with thoſe ſpeculative illuſions, which are the reſult of ſolitude and ſecluſion. He wrote them with a certainty of their being oppoſed, ſifted, examined, and reviled; he therefore took care to build them up of ſuch materials, as could not be eaſily overthrown: they prevailed at the times in which they were written, they ſtill continue to the admiration of the preſent age, and will probably laſt for ever.

THE

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

PREFACE

TO

DR. BROOKES's

NEW AND ACCURATE SYSTEM OF

NATURAL HISTORY.

PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1763.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

OF all the ſtudies which have employed the induſtrious or amuſed the idle, perhaps Natural Hiſtory deſerves the preference; other ſciences generally terminate in doubt, or reſt in bare ſpeculation, but here every ſtep is marked with certainty, and while a deſcription of the objects around us teaches to ſupply our wants, it ſatisfies our curioſity.

The multitude of Nature's productions, however, ſeems at firſt to bewilder the inquirer, rather than excite his attention; the various wonders of the animal, vegetable, or mineral world, ſeem to exceed all powers of computation, and the ſcience appears barren from its amazing fertility. But a nearer acquaintance with this ſtudy, by giving method to our reſearches, points out a ſimilitude in many objects which at firſt appeared different; the mind by degrees riſes to conſider the things before it in general lights, till at length it finds Nature, in almoſt every inſtance, acting with her uſual ſimplicity.

Among the number of Philoſophers, who undaunted by their ſuppoſed variety, have attempted to give a deſcription of the productions of Nature, Ariſtotle deſerves the firſt place. This great philoſopher was furniſhed by his pupil Alexander, with all that the then known world could produce to complete his deſign. By ſuch parts of his work as have eſcaped the wreck of time, it appears that he underſtood Nature more clearly, and in a more comprehenſive manner than even the preſent age, enlightened as it is with ſo many later diſcoveries, can

Digitized by Google

boaſt. His deſign appears vaſt, and his knowledge extenſive; he only conſiders things in general lights, and leaves every ſubject when it becomes too minute or remote to be uſeful. In his Hiſtory of Animals, he firſt deſcribes man, and makes him a ſtandard with which to compare the deviations in every more imperfect kind that is to follow. But if he has excelled in the hiſtory of each, he, together with Pliny and Theophraſtus, has failed in the exactneſs of their deſcriptions. There are many creatures deſcribed by thoſe Naturaliſts of antiquity, which are ſo imperfectly characterized, that it is impoſſible to tell to what animal now ſubſiſting we can refer the deſcription. This is an unpardonable neglect, and alone ſufficient to depreciate their merits, but their credulity and the mutilations they have ſuffered by time, have rendered them ſtill leſs uſeful, and juſtify each ſubſequent attempt to improve what they have left behind. The moſt laborious, as well as the moſt voluminous Naturaliſt among the moderns is Aldrovandus. He was furniſhed with every requiſite for making an extenſive body of Natural Hiſtory. He was learned and rich, and during the courſe of a long life indefatigable and accurate. But his works are inſupportably tedious and diſguſting, filled with unneceſſary quotations and unimportant digreſſions. Whatever learning he had he was willing ſhould be known, and, unwearied himſelf, he ſuppoſed his readers could never tire; in ſhort, he appears an uſeful aſſiſtant to thoſe who would compile a body of Natural Hiſtory, but is utterly unſuited to ſuch as only wiſh to read it with profit and delight.

Geſner and Jonſton, willing to abridge the voluminous productions of Aldrovandus, have attempted to reduce Natural Hiſtory into method, but their efforts have been ſo incomplete as ſcarcely to deſerve mentioning. Their attempts were improved upon

Digitized by Google

upon ſome time after by Mr. Ray, whoſe method we have adopted in the Hiſtory of Quadrupedes, Birds, and Fiſhes, which is to follow. No ſyſtematical writer has been more happy than he in reducing Natural Hiſtory into a form, at once the ſhorteſt yet moſt comprehenſive.

The ſubſequent attempts of Mr. Klein and Linnæus, it is true, have had their admirers, but as all methods of claſſing the productions of Nature are calculated merely to eaſe the memory and enlighten the mind, that writer who anſwers ſuch ends with brevity and perſpicuity is moſt worthy of regard. And in this reſpect Mr. Ray undoubtedly remains ſtill without a rival; he was ſenſible that no accurate idea could be formed from a mere diſtribution of animals in particular claſſes; he has therefore ranged them according to their moſt obvious qualities; and, content with brevity in his diſtribution, has employed accuracy only in the particular deſcription of every animal. This intentional inaccuracy only in the general ſyſtem of Ray, Klein and Linnæus have undertaken to amend, and thus by multiplying diviſions, inſtead of impreſſing the mind with diſtinct ideas, they only ſerve to confound it, making the language of the ſcience more difficult than even the ſcience itſelf.

All order whatſoever is to be uſed for the ſake of brevity and perſpicuity; we have therefore followed that of Mr. Ray in preference to the reſt, whoſe method of claſſing animals, though not ſo accurate, perhaps is yet more obvious, and being ſhorter, is more eaſily remembered. In his life time he publiſhed his Synopſis Methodica Quadrupedum et Serpentini Generis, and after his death there came out a poſthumous work under the care of Dr. Derham, which, as the title page informs us, was reviſed and perfected before his death. Both the one and the

Digitized by Google

other have their merits, but as he wrote *currente calamo*, for ſubſiſtence, they are conſequently replete with errors, and though his manner of treating Natural Hiſtory be preferable to that of all others, yet there was ſtill room for a new work, that might at once retain his excellencies, and ſupply his deficiencies.

As to the Natural Hiſtory of Inſects, it has not been ſo long or ſo greatly cultivated as other parts of this ſcience. Our own countryman Mouſett is the firſt of any note, that I have met with, who has treated this ſubject with ſucceſs. However it was not till lately that it was reduced to a regular ſyſtem, which might be in a great meaſure owing to the ſeeming inſignificancy of the animals themſelves; even though they were always looked upon as of great uſe in medicine, and upon that account only have been taken notice of by many medical writers. Thus Dioſcorides has treated of their uſe in phyſic; and it muſt be owned, ſome of them have been well worth obſervation on this account. There were not wanting alſo thoſe who long ſince had thoughts of reducing this kind of knowledge to a regular form, among whom was Mr. Ray, who was diſcouraged by the difficulty attending it; this ſtudy has been purſued of late, however, with diligence and ſucceſs. Reaumur and Swammerdam have principally diſtinguiſhed themſelves on this account; and their reſpective treatiſes plainly ſhew, that they did not ſpend their labour in vain. Since their time ſeveral authors have publiſhed their Syſtems, among whom is Linnæus, whoſe method being generally eſteemed, I have thought proper to adopt. He has claſſed them in a very regular manner, though he ſays but little of the Inſects themſelves. However, I have endeavoured to ſupply that defect from other parts of his works, and from other authors who have written

Digitized by Google

written upon this ſubject; by which means it is hoped, the curioſity of ſuch as delight in theſe ſtudies, will be in ſome meaſure ſatisfied. Such of them as have been more generally admired, have been longeſt inſiſted upon, and particularly Caterpillars and Butterflies, relative to which, perhaps, there is the largeſt catalogue that has ever appeared in the Engliſh language.

Mr. Edwards and Mr. Buffon, one in the Hiſtory of Birds, the other of Quadrupedes, have undoubtedly deſerved highly of the public, as far as their labours have extended; but as they have hitherto cultivated but a ſmall part in the wide field of Natural Hiſtory, a comprehenſive ſyſtem in this moſt pleaſing ſcience has been hitherto wanting. Nor is it a little ſurpriſing, when every other branch of literature has been of late cultivated with ſo much ſucceſs among us, how this moſt intereſting department ſhould have been neglected. It has been long obvious that Ariſtotle was incomplete, and Pliny credulous, Aldrovandus too prolix, and Linnæus too ſhort to afford the proper entertainment, yet we have had no attempts to ſupply their defects, or to give an hiſtory of Nature at once complete and conciſe, calculated at once to pleaſe and improve.

How far the author of the preſent performance has obviated the wants of the public in theſe reſpects, is left to the world to determine; this much, however, he may without vanity aſſert, that whether the ſyſtem here preſented be approved or not, he has left the ſcience in a better ſtate than he found it. He has conſulted every author whom he imagined might give him new and authentic information, and painfully ſearched through heaps of lumber to detect falſehood; ſo that many parts of the following work have exhauſted much labour in the execution, though they may diſcover little to the ſuperficial obſerver.

Digitized by Google

Nor have I neglected any opportunity that offered of converſing upon theſe ſubjects with travellers, upon whoſe judgments and veracity I could rely. Thus comparing accurate narrations with what has been already written, and following either, as the circumſtances or credibility of the witneſs led me to believe. But I have had one advantage over almoſt all former Naturaliſts, namely that of having viſited a variety of countries myſelf, and examined the productions of each upon the ſpot. Whatever America, or the known parts of Africa have produced to excite curioſity has been carefully obſerved by me, and compared with the accounts of others. By this I have made ſome improvements that will appear in their place, and have been leſs liable to be impoſed upon by the hearſay relations of credulity.

A complete cheap and commodious body of Natural Hiſtory being wanted in our language, it was theſe advantages which prompted me to this undertaking. Such therefore as chooſe to range in the delightful fields of Nature, will, I flatter myſelf, here find a proper guide; and thoſe who have a deſign to furniſh a cabinet will find copious inſtructions. With one of theſe volumes in his hand a ſpectator may go through the largeſt Muſeum, the Britiſh not excepted, ſee Nature through all her varieties, and compare her uſual operations with thoſe wanton productions, in which ſhe ſeems to ſport with human ſagacity. I have been ſparing however in the deſcription of the deviations from the uſual courſe of production, firſt, becauſe ſuch are almoſt infinite, and the Natural Hiſtorian, who ſhould ſpend his time in deſcribing deformed Nature, would be as abſurd as the Statuary, who ſhould fix upon a deformed man, from whom to take his model of perfection.

But I would not raiſe expectations in the reader which it may not be in my power to ſatisfy; he who takes up a book of ſcience muſt not expect to ac-

Digitized by Google

quire knowledge at the ſame eaſy rate that a reader of romance does entertainment; on the contrary, all ſciences, and Natural Hiſtory among the reſt, have a language and a manner of treatment peculiar to themſelves, and he who attempts to dreſs them in borrowed or foreign ornaments, is every whit as uſeleſsly employed as the German apothecary we are told of, who turned the whole diſpenſatory into verſe. It will be ſufficient for me, if the following ſyſtem is found as pleaſing as the nature of the ſubject will bear, neither obſcured by an unneceſſary oſtentation of ſcience, nor lengthened out by an affected eagerneſs after needleſs embelliſhment.

The deſcription of every object will be found as clear and conciſe as poſſible, the deſign not being to amuſe the ear with well-turned periods, or the imagination with borrowed ornaments, but to impreſs the mind with the ſimpleſt views of nature. To anſwer this end more diſtinctly, a picture of ſuch animals is given as we are leaſt acquainted with. All that is intended by this is, only to guide the enquirer with more certainty to the object itſelf, as it is to be found in nature. I never would adviſe a ſtudent to apply to any ſcience, either Anatomy, Phyſic, or Natural Hiſtory, by looking on pictures only; they may ſerve to direct him more readily to the objects intended, but he muſt by no means ſuppoſe himſelf poſſeſſed of adequate and diſtinct ideas till he has viewed the things themſelves, and not their repreſentations.

Copper-plates, therefore, moderately well done, anſwer the learner's purpoſe every whit as well as thoſe which cannot be purchaſed but at a vaſt expence; they ſerve to guide us to the archetypes in Nature, and this is all that the fineſt picture ſhould be permitted to do, for Nature herſelf ought always to be examined by the learner before he has done.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

INTRODUCTION

TO A NEW

HISTORY OF THE WORLD;

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED

IN TWELVE VOLUMES 8VO.

BY J. NEWBERY 1764.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

TO THE PUBLIC.

EXPERIENCE every day convinces us, that no part of learning affords ſo much wiſdom upon ſuch eaſy terms as Hiſtory. Our advances in moſt other ſtudies are ſlow and diſguſting, acquired with effort, and retained with difficulty; but in a well written hiſtory every ſtep we proceed only ſerves to increaſe our ardour: we profit by the experience of others, without ſharing their toils or misfortunes; and in this part of knowledge, in a more particular manner, ſtudy is but relaxation.

Of all hiſtories however, that, which not confined to any particular reign or country, but which extends to the tranſactions of all mankind, is the moſt uſeful and entertaining. As in geography we can have no juſt idea of the ſituation of one country without knowing that of others, ſo in hiſtory it is in ſome meaſure neceſſary to be acquainted with the whole, thoroughly to comprehend a part. A knowledge of univerſal hiſtory is therefore highly uſeful, nor is it leſs entertaining. *Tacitus* complains, that the traſactions of a few reigns could not afford him a ſufficient ſtock of materials to pleaſe or intereſt the reader; but here that objection is entirely removed; an Hiſtory of the World preſents the moſt ſtriking events, with the greateſt variety.

Theſe are a part of the many advantages which univerſal hiſtory has over all others, and which have encouraged ſo many writers to attempt compiling works of this kind, among the antients as well as the moderns. Each invited by the manifeſt utility of the deſign; yet many of them failing through the great and unforeſeen difficulties of the undertaking.

The

Digitized by Google

The barrenneſs of events in the early periods of hiſtory, and their fertility in modern times, equally ſerving to increaſe their embarraſſments. In recounting the tranſactions of remote antiquity, there is ſuch a defect of materials, that the willingneſs of mankind to ſupply the chaſm, has given birth to falſhood and invited conjecture. The farther we look back into thoſe diſtant periods, all the objects ſeem to become more obſcure, or are totally loſt, by a ſort of perſpective diminution. In this caſe, therefore, when the eye of truth could no longer diſcern clearly, fancy undertook to form the picture; and fables were invented where truths were wanting. For this reaſon we have declined enlarging on ſuch diſquiſitions, not for want of materials, which offered themſelves at every ſtep of our progreſs, but becauſe we thought them not worth diſcuſſing. Neither have we encumbered the beginning of our work with the various opinions of the heathen philoſophers concerning the creation, which may be found in moſt of our ſyſtems of theology, and belong more properly to the divine than the hiſtorian. Senſible how liable we are to redundancy in this firſt part of our deſign, it has been our endeavour to unfold antient hiſtory with all poſſible conciſeneſs; and ſolicitous to improve the reader's ſtock of knowledge, we have been indifferent as to the diſplay of our own. We have not ſtopt to diſcuſs or confute all the abſurd conjectures men of ſpeculation have thrown in our way. We at firſt had even determined not to deform the page of truth with the names of thoſe, whoſe labours had only been calculated to encumber it with fiction and vain ſpeculation. However, we have thought proper, upon ſecond thoughts, ſlightly to mention them and their opinions, quoting the author at the bottom of the page, ſo that the reader who is curious about ſuch particularities, may know where to have recourſe for fuller information.

As

Digitized by Google

As in the early part of hiſtory a want of real facts hath induced many to ſpin out the little that was known with conjecture, ſo in the modern part the ſuperfluity of trifling anecdotes was equally apt to intoduce confuſion. In one caſe hiſtory has been rendered tedious from our want of knowing the truth, in the other from knowing too much of truth not worth our notice. Every year that is added to the age of the world, ſerves to lengthen the thread of its hiſtory; ſo that to give this branch of learning a juſt length in the circle of human purſuits, it is neceſſary to abridge ſeveral of the leaſt important facts. It is true, we often at preſent ſee the annals of a ſingle reign, or even the tranſactions of a ſingle year, occupying folios: but can the writers of ſuch tedious journals ever hope to reach poſterity, or do they think that our deſcendants, whoſe attention will naturally be turned to their own concerns, can exhauſt ſo much time in the examination of ours? A plan of general hiſtory rendered too extenſive, deters us from a ſtudy that is perhaps of all others the moſt uſeful, by rendering it too laborious; and inſtead of alluring our curioſity, excites our deſpair. Writers are unpardonable who convert our amuſement into labour, and diveſt knowledge of one of its moſt pleaſing allurements. The antients have repreſented Hiſtory under the figure of a woman eaſy, graceful, and inviting; but we have ſeen her in our days converted, like the virgin of *Nabis*, into an inſtrument of torture.

How far we have retrenched theſe exceſſes, and ſteered between the oppoſites of exuberance and abridgement, the judicious are left to determine. We here offer the public an Hiſtory of Mankind from the earlieſt accounts of time to the preſent age, in twelve volumes, which, upon mature deliberation, appeared to us the proper mean. It has been our

Digitized by Google

our endeavour to give every fact its full ſcope; but at the ſame time to retrench all diſguſting ſuperfluity, to give every object the due proportion it ought to maintain in the general picture of mankind, without crowding the canvas. We hope, therefore, that the reader will here ſee the revolutions of empires without confuſion, and trace arts and laws from one kingdom to another, without loſing his intereſt in the narrative of their other tranſactions. To attain theſe ends with greater certainty of ſucceſs, we have taken care in ſome meaſure to baniſh that late, and we may add gothic practice of uſing a multiplicity of notes; a thing as much unknown to the antient hiſtorians as it is diſguſting in the moderns. *Balzac* ſomewhere calls vain erudition the baggage of antiquity; might we in turn be permitted to make an apophthegm, we would call notes the baggage of a bad writer. It certainly argues a defect of method, or a want of perſpicuity, when an author is thus obliged to write notes upon his own works; and it may aſſuredly be ſaid, that whoever undertakes to write a comment upon himſelf, will for ever remain without a rival his own commentator. We have therefore lopped off ſuch excreſcencies, though not to any degree of affectation; as ſometimes an acknowledged blemiſh may be admitted into works of ſkill, either to cover a greater defect, or to take a nearer courſe to beauty. Having mentioned the danger of affectation, it may be proper to obſerve, that as this of all defects is moſt apt to inſinuate itſelf into ſuch a work, we have therefore been upon our guard againſt it. Innovation in a performance of this nature ſhould by no means be attempted: thoſe names and ſpellings which have been uſed in our language for time immemorial ought to continue unaltered; for, like ſtates, they acquire a ſort of *jus diuturnæ poſſeſſionis*, as the civilians

Digitized by Google

lians expreſs it, however unjuſt their original claims might have been.

With reſpect to chronology and geography, the one of which fixes actions to time, while the other aſſigns them to place, we have followed the moſt approved methods among the moderns. All that was requiſite in this, was to preſerve one ſyſtem of each invariably, and permit ſuch as choſe to adopt the plans of others, to rectify our deviations to their own ſtandard. If actions and things are made to preſerve their due diſtances of time and place mutually with reſpect to each other, it matters little as to the duration of them all with reſpect to eternity, or their ſituation with regard to the univerſe.

Thus much we have thought proper to premiſe concerning a work which, however executed, has coſt much labour and great expence. Had we for our judges the unbiaſſed and the judicious alone, few words would have ſerved, or even ſilence would have been our beſt addreſs; but when it is conſidered that we have laboured for the public, that miſcellaneous being, at variance within itſelf, from the differing influence of pride, prejudice or incapacity; a public already ſated with attempts of this nature, and in a manner unwilling to find out merit till forced upon its notice; we hope to be pardoned for thus endeavouring to ſhew where it is preſumed we have had a ſuperiority. An Hiſtory of the World to the preſent time, at once ſatisfactory and ſuccinct, calculated rather for uſe than curioſity, to be read rather than conſulted, ſeeking applauſe from the reader's feelings, not from his ignorance of learning, or affectation of being thought learned; an Hiſtory that may be purchaſed at an eaſy expence, yet that omits nothing material, delivered in a ſtile correct, yet familiar, was wanting in our language; and though ſenſible of our own inſufficiency, this defect we have attempted

Digitized by Google

attempted to ſupply. Whatever reception the preſent age or poſterity may give this work, we reſt ſatisfied with our own endeavours to deſerve a kind one. The completion of our deſign has for ſome years taken up all the time we could ſpare from other occupations, of leſs importance indeed to the public, but probably more advantageous to ourſelves. We are unwilling therefore to diſmiſs this ſubject without obſerving, that the labour of ſo great a part of life ſhould at leaſt be examined with candour, and not careleſsly confounded in that multiplicity of daily publications which are conceived without effort, are produced without praiſe, and ſink without cenſure.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE PREFACE

TO THE

ROMAN HISTORY,

BY

DR. GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1769.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

THERE are ſome ſubjects on which a writer muſt decline all attempts to acquire fame, ſatisfied with being obſcurely uſeful. After ſuch a number of Roman Hiſtories, in almoſt all languages, antient and modern, it would be but impoſture to pretend new diſcoveries, or to expect to offer any thing in a work of this kind, which has not been often anticipated by others. The facts which it relates have been an hundred times repeated, and every occurrence has been ſo variouſly conſidered, that learning can ſcarcely find a new anecdote, or genius give novelty to the old. I hope, therefore, for the reader's indulgence, if, in the following attempt, it ſhall appear, that my only aim was to ſupply a conciſe, plain, and unaffected narrative of the Riſe and Decline of a well-known empire. I was contented to make ſuch a book as could not fail of being ſerviceable, though of all others the moſt unlikely to promote the reputation of the writer. Inſtead, therefore, of preſſing forward among the ambitious, I only claim the merit of knowing my own ſtrength, and falling back among the hindmoſt ranks, with conſcious inferiority.

I am not ignorant, however, that it would be no difficult taſk to purſue the ſame art by which many dull men, every day, acquire a reputation in Hiſtory; ſuch might eaſily be attained, by fixing on ſome obſcure period to write upon, where much ſeeming erudition might be diſplayed, almoſt unknown, becauſe not worth remembering; and many maxims in politicks might be advanced entirely new, becauſe altogether falſe. But I have purſued a contrary method, chooſing the moſt noted period

Digitized by Google

in Hiſtory, and offering no remarks but ſuch as I thought ſtrictly true.

The reaſons of my choice were, that we had no hiſtory of this ſplendid period in our language, but what was either too voluminous for common uſe, or too meanly written to pleaſe. Catrou and Rouille's hiſtory in ſix volumes folio, tranſlated into our language by Bundy, is entirely unſuited to the time and expence mankind uſually chooſe to beſtow upon this ſubject: Rollin and his continuator Crevier, making nearly thirty volumes octavo, ſeem to labour under the ſame imputation; as likewiſe Hooke, who has ſpent three quartos upon the Republic alone, the reſt of his undertaking remaining unfiniſhed *. There only, therefore, remained the hiſtory by Echard, in five volumes octavo, whoſe plan and mine ſeemed to coincide; and had his execution been equal to his deſign, it had precluded the preſent undertaking. But the truth is, it is ſo poorly written, the facts ſo crowded, the narration ſo ſpiritleſs, and the characters ſo indiſtinctly marked, that the moſt ardent curioſity muſt cool in the peruſal; and the nobleſt tranſactions that ever warmed the human heart, as deſcribed by him, muſt ceaſe to intereſt.

I have endeavoured, therefore, in the preſent work, or rather compilation, to obviate the inconveniences ariſing from the exuberance of the former, as well as from the unpleaſantneſs of the latter. It was ſuppoſed, that two volumes might be made to comprize all that was requiſite to be known, or pleaſing to be read, by ſuch as only examined Hiſtory, to prepare them for more important ſtudies. Too much time may be given even to laudable purſuits, and

* Mr. Hooke's three quartos above-mentioned reach only to the end of the Gallic war. A fourth volume to the end of the Republic, was afterwards publiſhed in 1771. Dr. Goldſmith's preface was written in 1769. Mr. Hooke's quarto edition has been republiſhed in eleven volumes octavo.

Digitized by Google

there is none more apt than this, to allure the ſtudent from the neceſſary branches of learning, and, if I may ſo expreſs it, entirely to engroſs his induſtry. What is here offered, therefore, may be ſufficient for all, except ſuch who make hiſtory the peculiar buſineſs of their lives; to ſuch the moſt tedious narrative will ſeem but an abridgement, as they meaſure the merits of a work, rather by the quantity than the quality of its contents: others, however, who think more ſoberly, will agree, that in ſo extenſive a field as that of the tranſactions of Rome, more judgment may be ſhewn, by ſelecting what is important than by adding what is obſcure.

The hiſtory of this empire has been extended to ſix volumes folio; and I aver, that with very little learning, it might be increaſed to ſixteen more, but what would this be, but to load the ſubject with unimportant facts, and ſo to weaken the narration, that, like the empire deſcribed, it muſt neceſſarily ſink beneath the weight of its own acquiſitions.

But while I thus endeavoured to avoid prolixity, it was found no eaſy matter to prevent crowding the facts, and to give every narrative its proper play. In reality, no art can contrive to avoid oppoſite defects; he, who indulges in minute particularities, will be often languid; and he who ſtudies conciſeneſs, will as frequently be dry and unentertaining. As it was my aim to comprize as much as poſſible in the ſmalleſt compaſs, it is feared the work will often be ſubject to the latter imputation, but it was impoſſible to furniſh the public with a cheap Roman Hiſtory in two volumes octavo, and at the ſame time to give all that warmth to the narrative, all thoſe colourings to the deſcription, which works of twenty times the bulk have room to exhibit. I ſhall be fully ſatisfied, therefore, if it furniſhes an intereſt ſufficient to allure the reader to the end; and

Digitized by Google

this is a claim to which few abridgements can juſtly make pretenſions.

To theſe objections there are ſome who may add, that I have rejected many of the modern improvements in Roman Hiſtory, and that every character is left in full poſſeſſion of that fame or infamy which it obtained from its contemporaries, or thoſe who wrote immediately after.

I acknowledge the charge, for it appears now too late to rejudge the virtues or the vices of thoſe men, who were but very incompletely known even to their own hiſtorians. The Romans, perhaps, upon many occaſions formed wrong ideas of virtue; but they were by no means ſo ignorant or abandoned in general, as not to give to their brighteſt characters the greateſt ſhare of their applauſe; and I do not know whether it be fair to try Pagan actions by the ſtandard of Chriſtian morality.

But whatever may be my execution of this work, I have very little doubt about the ſucceſs of the undertaking; the ſubject is the nobleſt that ever employed human attention; and inſtead of requiring a writer's aid, will even ſupport him with its ſplendour. The Empire of the World, riſing from the meaneſt origin, and growing great by a ſtrict veneration for religion, and an implicit confidence in its commanders; continually changing the mode, but ſeldom the ſpirit of its government; being a conſtitution, in which the military power, whether under the name of citizens or ſoldiers, almoſt always prevailed; adopting all the improvements of other nations with the moſt indefatigable induſtry, and ſubmitting to be taught by thoſe whom it afterwards ſubdued—this is a picture that muſt affect us, however it be diſpoſed; theſe materials muſt have their value, under the hand of the meaneſt workman.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE PREFACE

TO THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND,

BY

DR. GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1771.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

FROM the favourable reception given to my Abridgement of Roman Hiſtory publiſhed ſome time ſince, ſeveral friends and others, whoſe buſineſs leads them to conſult the wants of the public, have been induced to ſuppoſe that an Engliſh hiſtory written on the ſame plan, would be acceptable.

It was their opinion that we ſtill wanted a work of this kind, where the narrative, though very conciſe, is not totally without intereſt, and the facts, though crowded, are yet diſtinctly ſeen.

The buſineſs of abridging the works of others has hitherto fallen to the lot of very dull men; and the art of blotting, which an eminent critic calls the moſt difficult of all others, has been uſually practiſed by thoſe who found themſelves unable to write. Hence our abridgements are generally more tedious than the works from which they pretend to relieve us; and they have effectually embarraſſed that road which they laboured to ſhorten.

As the preſent compiler ſtarts with ſuch humble competitors, it will ſcarcely be thought vanity in him if he boaſts himſelf their ſuperior. Of the many abridgements of our own hiſtory hitherto publiſhed, none ſeems poſſeſſed of any ſhare of merit or reputation; ſome have been written in dialogue, or merely in the ſtiffneſs of an index, and ſome to anſwer the purpoſes of a party. A very ſmall ſhare of taſte, therefore, was ſufficient to keep the compiler from the defects of the one, and a very ſmall ſhare of philoſophy from the miſrepreſentations of the other.

It

Digitized by Google

It is not eaſy, however, to ſatisfy the different expectations of mankind in a work of this kind, calculated for every apprehenſion, and on which all are conſequently capable of forming ſome judgment. Some may ſay that it is too long to paſs under the denomination of an abridgement; and others, that it is too dry to be admitted as an hiſtory; it may be objected that reflection is almoſt entirely baniſhed to make room for facts, and yet that many facts are wholly omitted, which might be neceſſary to be known. It muſt be confeſſed that all thoſe objections are partly true; for it is impoſſible in the ſame work at once to attain contrary advantages. The compiler, who is ſtinted in room, muſt often ſacrifice intereſt to brevity; and, on the other hand, while he endeavours to amuſe, muſt frequently tranſgreſs the limits to which his plan ſhould confine him. Thus all ſuch as deſire only amuſement may be diſguſted with his brevity, and ſuch as ſeek for information may object to his diſplacing facts for empty deſcription.

To attain the greateſt number of advantages with the feweſt inconveniences, is all that can be attained in an abridgement, the name of which implies imperfection. It will be ſufficient, therefore, to ſatisfy the writer's wiſhes, if the preſent work be found a plain, unaffected narrative of facts, with juſt ornament enough to keep attention awake, and with reflection barely ſufficient to ſet the reader upon thinking. Very moderate abilities were equal to ſuch an undertaking, and it is hoped the performance will ſatisfy ſuch as take up books to be informed or amuſed, without much conſidering who the writer is, or envying any ſucceſs he may have had in a former compilation.

As the preſent publication is deſigned for the benefit of thoſe who intend to lay a foundation for future

Digitized by Google

ture ſtudy, or deſire to refreſh their memories upon the old, or who think a moderate ſhare of hiſtory ſufficient for the purpoſes of life, recourſe has been had only to thoſe authors which are beſt known, and thoſe facts only have been ſelected which are allowed on all hands to be true. Were an epitome of hiſtory the field for diſplaying erudition, the author could ſhew that he has read many books which others have neglected, and that he alſo could advance many anecdotes which are at preſent very little known. But it muſt be remembered, that all theſe minute recoveries could be inſerted only to the excluſion of more material facts, which it would be unpardonable to omit. He foregoes, therefore, the petty ambition of being thought a reader of forgotten books; his aim being not to add to our preſent ſtock of hiſtory, but to contract it.

The books which have been uſed in this abridgement are chiefly Rapin, Carte, Smollett, and Hume. They have each their peculiar admirers, in proportion as the reader is ſtudious of hiſtorical antiquities, fond of minute anecdote, a warm partiſan, or a deliberate reaſoner. Of theſe I have particularly taken Hume for my guide, as far as he goes; and it is but juſtice to ſay, that wherever I was obliged to abridge his work, I did it with reluctance, as I ſcarcely cut out a ſingle line that did not contain a beauty.

But though I muſt warmly ſubſcribe to the learning, elegance, and depth of Mr. Hume's hiſtory, yet I cannot entirely acquieſce in his principles. With regard to religion, he ſeems deſirous of playing a double part, of appearing to ſome readers as if he reverenced, and to others as if he ridiculed it. He ſeems ſenſible of the political neceſſity of religion in every ſtate; but at the ſame time he would every where inſinuate that it owes its authority to no

Digitized by Google

higher an origin. Thus he weakens its influence, while he contends for its utility, and vainly hopes, that while free-thinkers ſhall applaud his ſcepticiſm, real believers will reverence him for his zeal.

In his opinions reſpecting government perhaps alſo he may be ſome times reprehenſible; but in a country like ours, where mutual contention contributes to the ſecurity of the conſtitution, it will be impoſſible for an hiſtorian, who attempts to have any opinion, to ſatisfy all parties. It is not yet decided in politics, whether the diminution of kingly power in England tends to increaſe the happineſs or the freedom of the people. For my own part, from ſeeing the bad effects of the tyranny of the great in thoſe republican ſtates that pretend to be free, I cannot help wiſhing that our monarchs may ſtill be allowed to enjoy the power of controuling the incroachments of the great at home.

A king may eaſily be reſtrained from doing wrong, as he is but one man; but if a number of the great are permitted to divide all authority, who can puniſh them if they abuſe it? Upon this principle, therefore, and not from empty notions of divine or hereditary right, ſome may think I have leaned towards monarchy. But as, in the things I have hitherto written, I have neither allured the vanity of the great by flattery, nor ſatisfied the malignity of the vulgar by ſcandal, as I have endeavoured to get an honeſt reputation by liberal purſuits, it is hoped the reader will admit my impartiality.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE PREFACE

TO AN

HISTORY OF THE EARTH,

AND

ANIMATED NATURE,

BY

DR. GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1774.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

NATURAL Hiſtory, conſidered in its utmoſt extent, comprehends two objects. Firſt, that of diſcovering, aſcertaining, and naming all the various productions of Nature. Secondly, that of deſcribing the properties, manners, and relations, which they bear to us, and to each other. The firſt, which is the moſt difficult part of the ſcience, is ſyſtematical, dry, mechanical, and incomplete. The ſecond is more amuſing, exhibits new pictures to the imagination, and improves our reliſh for exiſtence, by widening the proſpect of Nature around us.

Both, however, are neceſſary to thoſe who would underſtand this pleaſing ſcience in its utmoſt extent. The firſt care of every enquirer, no doubt, ſhould be, to ſee, to viſit, and examine every object, before he pretends to inſpect its habitudes or its hiſtory. From ſeeing and obſerving the thing itſelf, he is moſt naturally led to ſpeculate upon its uſes, its delights, or its inconveniencies.

Numberleſs obſtructions, however, are found in this part of his purſuit, that fruſtrate his diligence and retard his curioſity. The objects in Nature are ſo many, and even thoſe of the ſame kind are exhibited in ſuch a variety of forms, that the enquirer finds himſelf loſt, in the exuberance before him, and like a man who attempts to count the ſtars unaſſiſted by art, his powers are all diſtracted in barren ſuperfluity.

To remedy this embarraſsment artificial ſyſtems have been deviſed, which grouping into maſſes thoſe parts of Nature more nearly reſembling each other, refer

Digitized by Google

fer the enquirer for the name of the ſingle object he deſires to know, to ſome one of thoſe general diſtributions, where it is to be found by further examination. If, for inſtance, a man ſhould in his walks meet with an animal, the name and conſequently the hiſtory of which he deſires to know, he is taught by ſyſtematic writers of Natural Hiſtory to examine its moſt obvious qualities, whether a quadrupede, a bird, a fiſh, or an inſect. Having determined it, for explanation ſake, to be an inſect, he examines whether it has wings; if he finds it poſſeſſed of theſe, he is taught to examine whether it has two or four; if poſſeſſed of four, he is taught to obſerve, whether the two upper wings are of a ſhelly hardneſs, and ſerve as caſes to thoſe under them; if he finds the wings compoſed in this manner, he is then taught to pronounce, that this inſect is one of the beetle kind; of the beetle kind there are three different claſſes, diſtinguiſhed from each other by their feelers; he examines the inſect before him, and finds that the feelers are elevated or knobbed at the ends; of beetles, with feelers thus formed, there are ten kinds, and among thoſe, he is taught to look for the preciſe name of that which is before him. If, for inſtance, the knob be divided at the ends, and the belly be ſtreaked with white, it is no other than the Dor or the Maybug, an animal, the noxious qualities of which give it a very diſtinguiſhed rank in the hiſtory of the inſect creation. In this manner a ſyſtem of Natural Hiſtory may, in ſome meaſure, be compared to a dictionary of words. Both are ſolely intended to explain the names of things; but with this difference, that in the dictionary of words we are led from the name of the thing to its definition, whereas in the ſyſtem of Natural Hiſtory, we are led from the definition to find out the name.

Such

Digitized by Google

Such are the efforts of writers, who have compoſed their works with great labour and ingenuity, to direct the learner in his progreſs through Nature, and to inform him of the name of every animal, plant, or foſſil ſubſtance, that he happens to meet with; but it would be only deceiving the reader, to conceal the truth, which is, that books alone can never teach him this art in perfection; and the ſolitary ſtudent can never ſucceed. Without a maſter and a previous knowledge of many of the objects in Nature, his book will only ſerve to confound and diſguſt him. Few of the individual plants or animals that he may happen to meet with, are in that preciſe ſtate of health, or that exact period of vegetation, whence their deſcriptions were taken. Perhaps he meets the plant only with leaves, but the ſyſtematic writer has deſcribed it in flower. Perhaps he meets the bird before it has moulted its firſt feathers, while the ſyſtematic deſcription was made in the ſtate of full perfection. He thus ranges without an inſtructor, confuſed and with ſickening curioſity from ſubject to ſubject, till at laſt he gives up the purſuit, in the multiplicity of his diſappointments. Some practice, therefore, much inſtruction and diligent reading are requiſite to make a ready and expert Naturaliſt, who ſhall be able, even by the help of a ſyſtem, to find out the name of every object he meets with. But when this tedious, though requiſite part of ſtudy is attained, nothing but delight and variety attend the reſt of his journey. Wherever he travels, like a man in a country where he has many friends, he meets with nothing but acquaintances and allurements in all ſtages of his way. The mere uninformed ſpectator paſſes on in gloomy ſolitude, but the Naturaliſt, in every plant, in every inſect, and every pebble, finds ſomething to entertain his curioſity, and excite his ſpeculation.

Digitized by Google

Hence it appears, that a ſyſtem may be conſidered as a dictionary in the ſtudy of Nature. The antients, however, who have all written moſt delightfully on this ſubject, ſeem entirely to have rejected thoſe humble and mechanical helps of ſcience. They contented themſelves with ſeizing upon the great outlines of hiſtory, and paſſing over what was common, as not worth the detail; they only dwelt upon what was new, great, and ſurprizing, and ſometimes even warmed the imagination at the expence of truth. Such of the moderns as revived this ſcience in Europe, undertook the taſk more methodically, though not in a manner ſo pleaſing. Aldrovandus, Geſner, and Johnſon ſeemed deſirous of uniting the entertaining and rich deſcriptions of the antients with the dry and ſyſtematic arrangement, of which they were the firſt projectors. This attempt, however, was extremely imperfect, as the great variety of Nature was, as yet, but very inadequately known. Nevertheleſs, by attempting to carry on both objects at once; firſt, of directing us to the name of the things, and then, giving the detail of its hiſtory they drew out their works into a tedious and unreaſonable length; and thus mixing incompatible aims, they have left their labours, rather to be occaſionally conſulted, than read with delight by poſterity.

The later moderns, with that good ſenſe which they have carried into every other part of ſcience, have taken a different method in cultivating Natural Hiſtory. They have been content to give, not only the brevity, but alſo the dry and diſguſting air of a dictionary to their ſyſtems. Ray, Klin, Briſſon, and Linnæus, have had only one aim, that of pointing out the object in Nature, of diſcovering its name, and where it was to be found in thoſe authors, that treated of it in a more prolix and ſatisfactory manner. Thus Natural Hiſtory at preſent is carried on

Digitized by Google

on in two distinct and separate channels, the one serving to lead us to the thing, the other conveying the history of the thing as supposing it already known.

The following Natural History is written with only such an attention to system as serves to remove the reader's embarrassments, and allure him to proceed. It can make no pretensions in directing him to the name of every object he meets with; that belongs to works of a very different kind, and written with very different aims. It will fully answer my design, if the reader, being already possessed of the name of any animal, shall find here a short, though satisfactory history of its habitudes, its subsistence, its manners, its friendships and hostilities. My aim has been to carry on just as much method, as was sufficient to shorten my descriptions by generalizing them, and never to follow order where the art of writing, which is but another name for good sense, informed me that it would only contribute to the reader's embarrassment.

Still, however, the reader will perceive that I have formed a kind of system in the history of every part of Animated Nature, directing myself by the great and obvious distinctions that she herself seems to have made, which, though too few to point exactly to the name, are yet sufficient to illuminate the subject, and remove the reader's perplexity. Mr. Buffon, indeed, who has brought greater talents to this part of learning than any other man, has almost entirely rejected method in classing quadrupedes. This, with great deference to such a character, appears to me running into the opposite extreme; and, as some moderns have of late spent much time, great pains, and some learning, all to very little purpose, in systematic arrangement, he seems so much disgusted by their trifling, but ostentatious efforts, that he describes his animals al-

Digitized by Google

moſt in the order they happen to come before him. This want of method ſeems to be a fault, but he can looſe little by a criticiſm, which every dull man can make, or by an error in arrangement, from which the dulleſt are the moſt uſually free.

In other reſpects, as far as this able philoſopher has gone, I have taken him for my guide. The warmth of his ſtyle and the brilliancy of his imagination are inimitable. Leaving him, therefore, without a rival in theſe, and only availing myſelf of his information; I have been content to deſcribe things in my own way; and though many of the materials are taken from him, yet I have added, retrenched, and altered as I thought proper. It was my intention at one time, whenever I differed from him, to have mentioned it at the bottom of the page; but this occurred ſo often, that I ſoon found it would look like envy, and might, perhaps, convict me of thoſe very errors which I was wanting to lay upon him.

I have therefore, as being every way his debtor, concealed my diſſent, where my opinion was different; but wherever I borrow from him, I take care at the bottom of the page to expreſs my obligations. But though my obligations to this writer are many, they extend but to the ſmalleſt part of the work, as he has hitherto completed only the Hiſtory of Quadrupedes. I was therefore left to my reading alone, to make out the Hiſtory of Birds, Fiſhes, and Inſects, of which the arrangement was ſo difficult, and the neceſſary information ſo widely diffuſed, and ſo obſcurely related when found, that it proved by much the moſt laborious part of the undertaking. Thus having made uſe of Mr. Buffon's lights in the firſt part of this work, I may, with ſome ſhare of confidence, recommend it to the public. But what ſhall I ſay of that part, where

Digitized by Google

where I have been entirely left without his aſſiſtance? As I would affect neither modeſty nor confidence, it will be ſufficient to ſay, that my reading upon this part of the ſubject has been very extenſive; and that I have taxed my ſcanty circumſtances in procuring books which are on this ſubject of all others the moſt expenſive. In conſequence of this induſtry, I here offer a work to the public, of a kind, which has never been attempted in ours, or any other modern language, that I know of. The antients, indeed, and Pliny in particular, have anticipated me, in the preſent manner of treating Natural Hiſtory. Like thoſe hiſtorians who deſcribed the events of a campaign, they have not condeſcended to give the private particulars of every individual that formed the army; they were content with characteriſing the generals, and deſcribing their operations, while they left it to meaner hands to carry the muſter roll. I have followed their manner, rejecting the numerous fables which they adopted, and adding the improvements of the moderns, which are ſo numerous that they actually make up the bulk of Natural Hiſtory.

The delight which I found in reading Pliny, firſt inſpired me with the idea of a work of this nature. Having a taſte rather claſſical than ſcientific, and having but little employed myſelf in turning over the dry labours of modern ſyſtem-makers, my earlieſt intention was to tranſlate this agreeable writer, and by the help of a commentary to make my work as amuſing as I could. Let us dignify Natural Hiſtory never ſo much with the grave appellation of a uſeful ſcience, yet ſtill we muſt confeſs that it is the occupation of the idle and the ſpeculative, more than of the ambitious part of mankind. My intention was to treat what I then conceived to be an idle ſubject, in an idle manner; and not to hedge round

Digitized by Google

plain and ſimple narratives with hard words, accumulated diſtinctions, oſtentatious learning, and diſquiſitions that produced no conviction. Upon the appearance, however, of Mr. Buffon's work, I dropped my former plan and adopted the preſent, being convinced by his manner, that the beſt imitation of the antients was to write from our own feelings, and to imitate Nature.

It will be my chief pride, therefore, if this work may be found an innocent amuſement for thoſe who have nothing elſe to employ them, or who require a relaxation from labour. Profeſſed Naturaliſts will, no doubt, find it ſuperficial; and yet I ſhould hope that even theſe will diſcover hints, and remarks, gleaned from various reading, not wholly trite or elementary; I would wiſh for their approbation. But my chief ambition is to drag up the obſcure and gloomy learning of the cell to open inſpection; to ſtrip it from its garb of auſterity, and to ſhew the beauties of that form, which only the induſtrious and the inquiſitive have been hitherto permitted to approach.

PRE-

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

TO THE

BEAUTIES OF ENGLISH POETRY.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1767.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

MY Bookſeller having informed me that there was no collection of Engliſh Poetry among us, of any eſtimation, I thought a few hours ſpent in making a proper ſelection would not be ill beſtowed.

Compilations of this kind are chiefly deſigned for ſuch as either want leiſure, ſkill, or fortune, to chooſe for themſelves; for perſons whoſe profeſſions turn them to different purſuits, or who, not yet arrived at ſufficient maturity, require a guide to direct their application. To our youth, particularly, a publication of this ſort may be uſeful; ſince, if compiled with any ſhare of judgment, it may at once unite precept and example, ſhew them what is beautiful, and inform them why it is ſo: I therefore offer this, to the beſt of my judgment, as the beſt collection that has as yet appeared; though, as taſtes are various, numbers will be of a very different opinion. Many, perhaps, may wiſh to ſee in it the poems of their favourite authors, others may wiſh that I had ſelected from works leſs generally read, and others ſtill may wiſh that I had ſelected from their own. But my deſign was to give a uſeful, unaffected compilation; one that might tend to advance the reader's taſte, and not impreſs him with exalted ideas of mine. Nothing is ſo common, and yet ſo abſurd, as affectation in criticiſm. The deſire of being thought to have a more diſcerning taſte than others, has often led writers to labour after error, and to be foremoſt in promoting deformity.

In

Digitized by Google

In this compilation I run but few riſques of that kind; every poem here is well known, and poſſeſſed, or the public has been long miſtaken, of peculiar merit: every poem has, as Ariſtotle expreſſes it, a beginning, a middle, and an end, in which, however trifling the rule may ſeem, moſt of the poetry in our language is deficient: I claim no merit in the choice, as it was obvious, for in all languages beſt productions are moſt eaſily found. As to the ſhort introductory criticiſms to each poem, they are rather deſigned for boys than men; for it will be ſeen that I declined all refinement, ſatisfied with being obvious and ſincere. In ſhort, if this work be uſeful in ſchools, or amuſing in the cloſet, the merit all belongs to others; I have nothing to boaſt, and at beſt can expect, not applauſe, but pardon.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

This ſeems to be Mr. Pope's moſt finiſhed production, and is, perhaps, the moſt perfect in our language. It exhibits ſtronger powers of imagination, more harmony of numbers, and a greater knowledge of the world, than any other of this Poet's Works: and it was probable, if our country were called upon to ſhew a ſpecimen of their genius to foreigners, this would be the work here fixed upon.

IL PENSEROSO.

I have heard a very judicious Critic ſay, that he had an higher idea of Milton's ſtile in poetry, from the two following poems, than from his Paradiſe Loſt. It is certain the imagination ſhewn in them is correct and ſtrong. The introduction to both in irregular meaſure is borrowed from the Italians, and hurts an Engliſh ear.

AN ELEGY,

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

This is a very fine poem, but overloaded with epithet. The heroic meaſure with alternate rhime is very properly adapted to the ſolemnity of the ſubject, as it is the ſloweſt movement that our language admits of. The latter part of the poem is pathetic and intereſting.

LONDON.

IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

This poem of Mr. Johnſon's is the beſt imitation of the original that has appeared in our language, being poſſeſſed of all the force and ſatyrical reſentment of Juvenal. Imitation gives us a much truer idea of the ancients than even tranſlation could do.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE SCHOOL MISTRESS,

IN IMITATION OF SPENCER.

This poem is one of thoſe happineſſes in which a poet excels himſelf, as there is nothing in all Shenſtone, which any way approaches it in merit; and, though I diſlike the imitations of our old Engliſh poets in general, yet on this minute ſubject the antiquity of the ſtyle produces a very ludicrous ſolemnity.

COOPER'S HILL.

This poem by Denham, though it may have been exceeded by later attempts in deſcription, yet deſerves the higheſt applauſe, as it far ſurpaſſes all that went before it: the concluding part, though a little too much crowded, is very maſterly.

ELOISA TO ABELARD.

The harmony of numbers in this poem is very fine. It is rather drawn out to too tedious a length, although the paſſions vary with great judgment. It may be conſidered as ſuperior to any thing in the epiſtolary way; and the many tranſlations which have been made of it into the modern languages, are, in ſome meaſure, a proof of this.

AN EPISTLE FROM MR. PHILIPS TO THE EARL OF DORSET.

The opening of this poem is incomparably fine. The latter part is tedious and trifling.

A LETTER FROM ITALY, TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE CHARLES LORD HALIFAX, 1701.

Few poems have done more honour to Engliſh genius than this. There is in it a ſtrain of political thinking

Digitized by Google

thinking that was, at that time, new in our poetry. Had the harmony of this been equal to that of Pope's verſification, it would be inconteſtibly the fineſt poem in our language; but there is a dryneſs in the numbers, which greatly leſſens the pleaſure excited both by the Poet's judgment and imagination.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST;

OR THE

POWER OF MUSIC.

AN ODE, IN HONOUR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

This ode has been more applauded, perhaps, than it has been felt; however, it is a very fine one, and gives its beauties rather at a third or fourth than at a firſt peruſal.

ODE FOR MUSIC ON ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

This ode has by many been thought equal to the former. As it is a repetition of Dryden's manner, it is ſo far inferior to him. The whole hint of Orpheus, with many of the lines, has been taken from an obſcure Ode upon Muſic, publiſhed in Tate's Miſcellanies.

THE SHEPHERD'S WEEK,

IN SIX PASTORALS.

Theſe are Mr. Gay's principal performance. They were originally intended, I ſuppoſe, as a burleſque on thoſe of Philips; but, perhaps without deſigning it, he has hit the true ſpirit of paſtoral poetry. In fact he more reſembles Theocritus than any other Engliſh paſtoral writer whatſoever. There runs through the whole a ſtrain of ruſtic pleaſantry, which ſhould ever diſtinguiſh this ſpecies of compoſition; but how far the antiquated expreſſions uſed here

Digitized by Google

here may contribute to the humour, I will not determine; for my own part, I could wish the simplicity were preserved, without recurring to such obsolete antiquity for the manner of expressing it.

MAC FLECKNOE.

The severity of this satire, and the excellence of its versification, give it a distinguished rank in this species of composition. At present, an ordinary reader would scarcely suppose that Shadwell, who is here meant by Mac Flecknoe, was worth being chastised; and that Dryden, descending to such game, was like an eagle stooping to catch flies.

The truth however is, Shadwell at one time held divided reputation with this great Poet. Every age produces its fashionable dunces, who, by following the transient topic or humour of the day, supply talkative ignorance with materials for conversation.

ON POETRY. A RHAPSODY.

Here follows one of the best versified poems in our language, and the most masterly production of its author. The severity with which Walpole is here treated was in consequence of that minister's having refused to provide for Swift in England, when applied to for that purpose in the year 1725 (if I remember right). The severity of a Poet, however, gave Walpole very little uneasiness. A man whose schemes, like this minister's, seldom extended beyond the exigency of the year, but little regarded the contempt of posterity.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

This poem, as Mr. Pope tells us himself, cost much attention and labour; and, from the easiness that appears in it, one would be apt to think as much.

FROM

Digitized by Google

FROM THE DISPENSARY. CANTO VI.

This ſixth canto of the Diſpenſary, by Dr. Garth, has more merit than the whole preceding part of the poem, and, as I am told, in the firſt edition of this work it is more correct than as here exhibited; but that edition I have not been able to find. The praiſes beſtowed on this poem are more than have been given to any other; but our approbation at preſent is cooler, for it owed part of its fame to party.

SELIM; OR THE SHEPHERDS MORAL.

The following eclogues, written by Mr. Collins, are very pretty: the images, it muſt be owned, are not very local; for the paſtoral ſubject could not well admit of it. The deſcription of Aſiatic magnificence and manners is a ſubject as yet unattempted amongſt us, and, I believe, capable of furniſhing a great variety of poetical imagery.

THE SPLENDID SHILLING.

This is reckoned the beſt parody of Milton in our language: it has been an hundred times imitated without ſucceſs. The truth is, the firſt thing in this way muſt preclude all future attempts, for nothing is ſo eaſy as to burleſque any man's manner, when we are once ſhewed the way.

A PIPE OF TOBACCO:

IN IMITATION OF SIX SEVERAL AUTHORS.

Mr. Hawkins Browne, the author of theſe, as I am told, had no good original manner of his own, yet we ſee how well he ſucceeds when he turns an imitator; for the following are rather imitations, than ridiculous parodies.

A NIGHT

Digitized by Google

A NIGHT PIECE ON DEATH.

The great fault of this piece, written by Dr. Parnell, is, that it is in eight ſyllable lines, very improper for the ſolemnity of the ſubject; otherwiſe, the poem is natural, and the reflections juſt.

A FAIRY TALE. By. Dr. PARNELL.

Never was the old manner of ſpeaking more happily applied, or a tale better told, than this.

PALEMON AND LAVINIA.

Mr. Thomſon, though, in general, a verboſe and affected poet, has told this ſtory with unuſual ſimplicity: it is rather given here for being much eſteemed by the public, than by the editor.

THE BASTARD.

Almoſt all things written from the heart, as this certainly was, have ſome merit. The Poet here deſcribes ſorrows and misfortunes which were by no means imaginary; and thus there runs a truth of thinking through this poem, without which it would be of little value, as Savage is, in other reſpects, but an indifferent poet.

THE POET AND HIS PATRON.

Mr. More was a poet that never had juſtice done him while living; there are few of the moderns have a more correct taſte, or a more pleaſing manner of expreſſing their thoughts. It was upon theſe fables he chiefly founded his reputation, yet they are by no means his beſt production.

AN EPISTLE TO A LADY.

This little poem, by Mr. Nugent, is very pleaſing. The eaſineſs of the poetry, and the juſtice of the thoughts, conſtitute its principal beauty.

HANS

Digitized by Google

HANS CARVEL.

This Bagatelle, for which, by the bye, Mr. Prior has got his greateſt reputation, was a tale told in all the old Italian collections of jeſts; and borrowed from thence by Fontaine. It had been tranſlated once or twice before into Engliſh, yet was never regarded till it fell into the hands of Mr. Prior.

A ſtrong inſtance how much every thing is improved in the hands of a man of genius.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

This poem is very fine; and, though in the ſame ſtrain with the preceding, is yet ſuperior.

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK;

ON THE DEATH OF MR. ADDISON.

This elegy (by Mr. Tickell) is one of the fineſt in our language: there is ſo little new that can be ſaid upon the death of a friend, after the complaints of Ovid, and the Latin Italians, in this way, that one is ſurpriſed to ſee ſo much novelty in this to ſtrike us, and ſo much intereſt to affect.

COLIN AND LUCY. A BALLAD.

Through all Tickell's Works there is a ſtrain of ballad-thinking, if I may ſo expreſs it; and in this profeſſed ballad, he ſeems to have ſurpaſſed himſelf. It is, perhaps, the beſt in our language in this way.

THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

This ode by Dr. Smollett does rather more honour to the author's feelings than his taſte. The mechanical part, with regard to numbers and language, is not ſo perfect as ſo ſhort a work as this requires; but the pathetic it contains, particularly in the laſt ſtanza but one, is exquiſitely fine.

Digitized by Google

ON THE DEATH OF THE LORD PROTECTOR.

Our poetry was not quite harmonized in Waller's time; ſo that this, which would be now looked upon as a ſlovenly ſort of verſification, was, with reſpect to the times in which it was written, almoſt a prodigy of harmony. A modern reader will chiefly be ſtruck with the ſtrength of thinking, and the turn of the compliments beſtowed upon the Uſurper. Every body has heard the anſwer our poet made Charles II; who aſked him how his poem upon Cromwell came to be finer than his panegyric upon himſelf. Your majeſty, replies Waller, knows, that poets always ſucceed beſt in fiction.

THE STORY OF PHŒBUS AND DAPHNE, APPLIED.

The French claim this as belonging to them. To whomſoever it belongs the Thought is finely turned.

NIGHT THOUGHTS, BY DR. YOUNG.

Theſe ſeem to be the beſt of the collection; from whence only the two firſt are taken. They are ſpoken of differently, either with exaggerated applauſe or contempt, as the reader's diſpoſition is either turned to mirth or melancholy.

SATIRE I.

Young's Satires were in higher reputation when publiſhed, than they ſtand in at preſent. He ſeems fonder of dazzling than pleaſing; of raiſing our admiration for his wit, than our diſlike of the follies he ridicules.

A PAS-

Digitized by Google

A PASTORAL BALLAD.

The ballads of Mr. Shenſtone are chiefly commended for the natural ſimplicity of the thoughts, and the harmony of the verſification. However they are not excellent in either.

PHŒBE, A PASTORAL.

This by Dr. Byron, is a better effort than the preceding.

A SONG.

"Deſpairing beſide a clear ſtream."

This by Mr. Rowe, is better than any thing of the kind in our language.

AN ESSAY ON POETRY.

This work by the Duke of Buckingham, is enrolled among our great Engliſh productions. The precepts are ſenſible, the poetry not indifferent, but it has been praiſed more than it deſerves.

CADENUS AND VANESSA.

This is thought one of Dr. Swift's correcteſt pieces; its chief merit, indeed, is the elegant eaſe with which a ſtory, but ill conceived in itſelf, is told.

ALMA; OR THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND.

Πάντα γέλως, καὶ πάντα κόνις, καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν·
Πάντα γὰρ ἐξ ἀλόγων ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα.

What Prior meant by this poem I can't underſtand: by the Greek motto to it one would think it was either to laugh at the ſubject or his reader. There are ſome parts of it very fine; and let them ſave the badneſs of the reſt.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE

TO

A COLLECTION OF POEMS

FOR YOUNG LADIES,

DEVOTIONAL, MORAL, AND ENTERTAINING.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1767.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

PREFACE.

DOCTOR FORDYCE'S excellent Sermons for Young Women in ſome meaſure gave riſe to the following compilation. In that work, where he ſo judiciouſly points out all the defects of female conduct to remedy them, and all the proper ſtudies which they ſhould purſue, with a view to improvement, Poetry is one to which he particularly would attach them. He only objects to the danger of purſuing this charming ſtudy through all the immoralities and falſe pictures of happineſs with which it abounds, and thus becoming the martyr of innocent curioſity.

In the following compilation care has been taken to ſelect, not only ſuch pieces as innocence may read without a bluſh, but ſuch as will even tend to ſtrengthen that innocence. In this little work a Lady may find the moſt exquiſite pleaſure, while ſhe is at the ſame time learning the duties of life; and, while ſhe courts only entertainment, be deceived into wiſdom. Indeed, this would be too great a boaſt in the preface to any original work; but here it can be made with ſafety, as every Poem in the following collection would ſingly have procured an Author great reputation.

They are divided into *Devotional*, *Moral*, and *Entertaining*, thus comprehending the three great duties of life; that which we owe to God, to our neighbour, and to ourſelves.

In the firſt part, it muſt be confeſſed, our Engliſh Poets have not very much excelled. In that department, namely, the praiſe of our Maker, by which Poetry began, and from which it deviated by

Digitized by Google

time, we are moſt faultily deficient. There are one or two, however, particularly the *Deity*, by Mr. Boyſe; a Poem, when it firſt came out, that lay for ſome time neglected, till introduced to public notice by Mr. Hervey and Mr. Fielding. In it the reader will perceive many ſtriking pictures, and perhaps glow with a part of that gratitude which ſeems to have inſpired the writer.

In the Moral part I am more copious, from the ſame reaſon, becauſe our language contains a large number of the kind. Voltaire, talking of our Poets, gives them the preference in moral pieces to thoſe of any other nation; and indeed no Poets have better ſettled the bounds of duty, or more preciſely determined the rules for conduct in life than ours. In this department the fair reader will find the Muſe has been ſolicitous to guide her, not with the allurements of a ſyren, but the integrity of a friend.

In the entertaining part my greateſt difficulty was what to reject. The materials lay in ſuch plenty, that I was bewildered in my choice; in this caſe then I was ſolely determined by the tendency of the Poem; and where I found one, however well executed, that ſeemed in the leaſt tending to diſtort the judgement, or inflame the imagination, it was excluded without mercy. I have here and there indeed, when one of particular beauty offered with a few blemiſhes, lopt off the defects, and thus, like the tyrant, who fitted all ſtrangers to the bed he had prepared for them, I have inſerted ſome, by firſt adapting them to my plan; we only differ in this, that he mutilated with a bad deſign, I from motives of a contrary nature.

It will be eaſier to condemn a compilation of this kind, than to prove its inutility. While young Ladies are readers, and while their guardians are ſolicitous that they ſhall only read the beſt books, there can

Digitized by Google

can be no danger of a work of this kind being diſagreeable. It offers, in a very ſmall compaſs, the very flowers of our Poetry, and that of a kind adapted to the ſex ſuppoſed to be its readers. Poetry is an art, which no young Lady can, or ought to be wholly ignorant of. The pleaſure which it gives, and indeed the neceſſity of knowing enough of it to mix in modern converſation, will evince the uſefulneſs of my deſign, which is to ſupply the higheſt and the moſt innocent entertainment at the ſmalleſt expence; as the Poems in this collection, if ſold ſingly, would amount to ten times the price of what I am able to afford the preſent.

THE

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE BEE,

A SELECT

COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

ON THE

MOST INTERESTING AND ENTERTAINING SUBJECTS.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1759.

THE

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, Nº I.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 6, 1759.

THERE is not, perhaps, a more whimſically diſmal figure in Nature, than a man of real modeſty who aſſumes an air of impudence; who, while his heart beats with anxiety, ſtudies eaſe, and affects good humour. In this ſituation, however, a periodical writer often finds himſelf, upon his firſt attempt to addreſs the public in form. All his power of pleaſing is damped by ſolicitude, and his chearfulneſs daſhed with apprehenſion. Impreſſed with the terrors of the tribunal before which he is going to appear, his natural humour turns to pertneſs, and for real wit he is obliged to ſubſtitute vivacity. His firſt publication draws a crowd; they part diſſatisfied, and the author, never more to be indulged with a favourable hearing, is left, to condemn the indelicacy of his own addreſs, or their want of diſcernment.

For my part, as I was never diſtinguiſhed for addreſs, and have often even blundered in making my bow, ſuch bodings as theſe had like to have totally repreſſed my ambition. I was at a loſs whether to give the public ſpecious promiſes, or give none; whether to be merry or ſad on this ſolemn occaſion. If I ſhould decline all merit, it was too probable the haſty reader might have taken me at my word. If on the other hand, like labourers in the Magazine trade, I had, with modeſt impudence, humbly preſumed to promiſe an epitome of all the good things that ever were ſaid or written, this might have diſguſted thoſe

Digitized by Google

thoſe readers I moſt deſire to pleaſe. Had I been merry, I might have been cenſured as *vaſtly low*; and had I been ſorrowful, I might have been left to mourn in ſolitude and ſilence: in ſhort, which ever way I turned, nothing preſented but proſpects of terror, deſpair, chandlers ſhops, and waſte paper.

In this debate between fear and ambition, my publiſher happening to arrive interrupted for a while my anxiety. Perceiving my embarraſſment about making my firſt appearance, he inſtantly offered his aſſiſtance and advice: "You muſt know, "ſir, ſays he, that the republic of letters is at pre-"ſent divided into three claſſes. One writer, for "inſtance, excels at a plan, or a title-page, another "works away the body of the book, and a third is "a dab at an index. Thus a Magazine is not the "reſult of any ſingle man's induſtry; but goes "through as many hands as a new pin, before it is "fit for the public. I fancy, ſir, continues he, I "can provide an eminent hand, and upon moderate "terms, to draw up a promiſing plan to ſmooth up "our readers a little, and pay them, as Colonel "Charteries paid his ſeraglio, at the rate of three "half pence in hand, and three ſhillings more in "promiſes."

He was proceeding in his advice, which however I thought proper to decline, by aſſuring him, that as I intended to purſue no fixed method, ſo it was impoſſible to form any regular plan; determined never to be tedious, in order to be logical, wherever pleaſure preſented, I was reſolved to follow. Like the Bee, which I had taken for the title of my paper, I would rove from flower to flower, with ſeeming inattention, but concealed choice, expatiate over all the beauties of the ſeaſon, and make my induſtry my amuſement.

This reply may alſo ſerve as an apology to the reader, who expects, before he ſits down, a bill of his future

Digitized by Google

future entertainment. It would be improper to pall his curioſity by leſſening his ſurprize, or anticipate any pleaſure I am able to procure him, by ſaying what ſhall come next. Thus much, however, he may be aſſured of, that neither war nor ſcandal ſhall make any part of it. Homer finely imagines his deity turning away with horror from the proſpect of a field of battle, and ſeeking tranquillity among a nation noted for peace and ſimplicity. Happy could any effort of mine, but for a moment, repreſs that ſavage pleaſure ſome men find in the daily accounts of human miſery! How gladly would I lead them from ſcenes of blood and altercation, to proſpects of innocence and eaſe, where every breeze breathes health, and every ſound is but the echo of tranquillity!

But whatever the merit of his intentions may be, every writer is now convinced that he muſt be chiefly indebted to good fortune for finding readers willing to allow him any degree of reputation. It has been remarked that almoſt every character which has excited either attention or praiſe, has owed part of its ſucceſs to merit, and part to an happy concurrence of circumſtances in its favour. Had Cæſar or Cromwell exchanged countries, the one might have been a ſerjeant, and the other an exciſeman. So it is with wit, which generally ſucceeds more from being happily addreſſed, than from its native poignancy. A *bon mot*, for inſtance, that might be reliſhed at White's, may loſe all its flavour when delivered at the Cat and Bag-pipes in St. Giles's. A jeſt calculated to ſpread at a gaming-table, may be received with a perfect neutrality of face, ſhould it happen to drop in a mackrel-boat. We have all ſeen dunces triumph in ſome companies, when men of real humour were diſregarded, by a general combination in favour of ſtupidity. To drive the obſervation as far

Digitized by Google

as it will go, ſhould the labours of a writer, who deſigns his performances for readers of a more refined appetite, fall into the hands of a devourer of compilations, what can he expect but contempt and confuſion! If his merits are to be determined by judges who eſtimate the value of a book from its bulk, or its frontiſpiece, every rival muſt acquire an eaſy ſuperiority, who with perſuaſive eloquence promiſes four extraordinary pages of *letter preſs*, or three beautiful prints, curiouſly coloured from nature.

But to proceed; though I cannot promiſe as much entertainment, or as much elegance, as others have done, yet the reader may be aſſured he ſhall have as much of both as I can. He ſhall, at leaſt, find me alive while I ſtudy his entertainment; for I ſolemnly aſſure him, I was never yet poſſeſſed of the ſecret at once of writing and ſleeping.

During the courſe of this paper, therefore, all the wit and learning I have are heartily at his ſervice; which if, after ſo candid a confeſſion, he ſhould, notwithſtanding, ſtill find it intolerably dull, low, or ſad ſtuff, this I proteſt is more than I know. I have a clear conſcience, and am entirely out of the ſecret.

Yet I would not have him, upon the peruſal of a ſingle paper, pronounce me incorrigible; he may try a ſecond, which, as there is a ſtudied difference in ſubject and ſtyle, may be more ſuited to his taſte; if this alſo fails, I muſt refer him to a third, or even to a fourth, in caſe of extremity: If he ſhould ſtill continue refractory, and find me dull to the laſt, I muſt inform him, with Bays in the Rehearſal, that I think him a very odd kind of a fellow, and deſire no more of his acquaintance.

It is with ſuch reflections as theſe I endeavour to fortify myſelf againſt the future contempt or neglect of ſome readers, and am prepared for their diſlike by

Digitized by Google

by mutual recrimination. If ſuch ſhould impute dealing neither in battles nor ſcandal to me as a fault, inſtead of acquieſcing in their cenſure, I muſt beg leave to tell them a ſtory.

A traveller, in his way to Italy, happening to paſs at the foot of the Alps, found himſelf at laſt in a country where the inhabitants had each a large excreſcence depending from the chin, like the pouch of a monkey. This deformity, as it was endemic, and the people little uſed to ſtrangers, it had been the cuſtom time immemorial to look upon as the greateſt ornament of the human viſage. Ladies grew toaſts from the ſize of their chins, and none were regarded as pretty fellows, but ſuch whoſe faces were broadeſt at the bottom. It was Sunday, a country church was at hand, and our traveller was willing to perform the duties of the day. Upon his firſt appearance at the church door, the eyes of all were naturally fixed upon the ſtranger; but what was their amazement, when they found that he actually wanted that emblem of beauty, a purſed chin! This was a defect that not a ſingle creature had ſufficient gravity (though they were noted for being grave) to withſtand. Stifled burſts of laughter, winks, and whiſpers circulated from viſage to viſage, and the priſmatic figure of the ſtranger's face was a fund of infinite gaiety; even the parſon, equally remarkable for his gravity and chin, could hardly refrain joining in the good humour. Our traveller could no longer patiently continue an object for deformity to point at. Good folks, ſaid he, I perceive that I am the unfortunate cauſe of all this good humour. It is true, I may have faults in abundance, but I ſhall never be induced to reckon my want of a ſwelled face among the number*.

* Dr. Goldſmith inſerted this Introduction, with a few trifling alterations, in the Volume of Eſſays he publiſhed in the year 1765.

Digitized by Google

On a beautiful YOUTH *ſtruck blind with Lightning.*

IMITATED FROM THE SPANISH.

LUMINE Acon dextro capta eſt Leonida ſiniſtro,
Et poterat forma vincere uterque Deos.
Parve puer, lumen quod habes concede puellæ;
Sic tu cæcus amor, ſic erit illa Venus *.

REMARKS ON OUR THEATRES.

OUR theatres are now opened, and all Grub-ſtreet is preparing its advice to the managers; we ſhall undoubtedly hear learned diſquiſitions on the ſtructure of one actor's legs, and another's eye-brows. We ſhall be told much of enunciations, tones and attitudes, and ſhall have our lighteſt pleaſures commented upon by didactic dullneſs. We ſhall, it is feared, be told, that Garrick is a fine actor, but then as a manager, ſo avaricious! That Palmer is a moſt ſurpriſing genius, and Holland likely to do well in a particular caſt of character. We ſhall have them giving Shuter inſtructions to amuſe us by rule, and deploring over the ruins of deſolated Majeſty at Covent-Garden. As I love to be adviſing too, for advice is eaſily given, and bears a ſhew of wiſdom and ſuperiority, I muſt be permitted to offer a few obſervations upon our theatres and actors, without, on this trivial occaſion, throwing my thoughts into the formality of method.

There is ſomething in the deportment of all our players infinitely more ſtiff and formal than among the actors of other nations. Their action ſits uneaſy

* An Engliſh Epigram on the ſame ſubject is inſerted in the Second Volume, p. 128.

upon

Digitized by Google

upon them; for as the Engliſh uſe very little geſture in ordinary converſation, our Engliſh-bred actors are obliged to ſupply ſtage geſtures by their imagination alone. A French comedian finds proper models of action in every company and in every coffee-houſe he enters. An Engliſhman is obliged to take his models from the ſtage itſelf; he is obliged to imitate Nature from an imitation of Nature. I know of no ſet of men more likely to be improved by travelling than thoſe of the theatrical profeſſion. The inhabitants of the continent are leſs reſerved than here; they may be ſeen through upon a firſt acquaintance; ſuch are the proper models to draw from; they are at once ſtriking, and are found in great abundance.

Though it would be inexcuſable in a comedian to add any thing of his own to the Poet's dialogue, yet as to action he is entirely at liberty. By this he may ſhew the fertility of his genius, the poignancy of his humour, and the exactneſs of his judgment; we ſcarcely ſee a coxcomb or a fool in common life, that has not ſome peculiar oddity in his action. Theſe peculiarities it is not in the power of words to repreſent, and depend ſolely upon the actor. They give a reliſh to the humour of the poet, and make the appearance of Nature more illuſive; the Italians, it is true, maſk ſome characters, and endeavour to preſerve the peculiar humour by the make of the maſk; but I have ſeen others ſtill preſerve a great fund of humour in the face without a maſk; one actor, particularly, by a ſquint which he threw into ſome characters of low life, aſſumed a look of infinite ſolidity. This, though upon reflection we might condemn, yet immediately upon repreſentation we could not avoid being pleaſed with. To illuſtrate what I have been ſaying by the plays I have of late gone to ſee: in the Miſer, which was played a few nights ago at Covent-Garden, Love-

Digitized by Google

gold appears through the whole in circumſtances of exaggerated avarice; all the player's action, therefore, ſhould conſpire with the poet's deſign, and repreſent him as an epitome of penury. The French comedian, in this character, in the midſt of one of his moſt violent paſſions, while he appears in an ungovernable rage, feels the demon of avarice ſtill upon him, and ſtoops down to pick up a pin, which he quilts into the flap of his coat-pocket with great aſſiduity. Two candles are lighted up for his wedding; he flies, and turns one of them into the ſocket; it is, however, lighted up again; he then ſteals to it, and privately crams it into his pocket. The Mock-Doctor was lately played at the other houſe. Here again the comedian had an opportunity of heightening the ridicule by action. The French player ſits in a chair with an high back, and then begins to ſhew away by talking nonſenſe, which he would have thought Latin by thoſe who he knows do not underſtand a ſyllable of the matter. At laſt he grows enthuſiaſtic, enjoys the admiration of the company, toſſes his legs and arms about, and in the midſt of his raptures and vociferation he and the chair fall back together. All this appears dull enough in the recital; but the gravity of Cato could not ſtand it in the repreſentation. In ſhort, there is hardly a character in comedy, to which a player of any real humour might not add ſtrokes of vivacity that could not fail of applauſe. But inſtead of this we too often ſee our fine gentlemen do nothing through a whole part, but ſtrut, and open their ſnuff-box; our pretty fellows ſit indecently with their legs acroſs, and our clowns pull up their breeches. Theſe, if once, or even twice repeated, might do well enough; but to ſee them ſerved up in every ſcene, argues the actor almoſt as barren as the character he would expoſe.

The

Digitized by Google

The magnificence of our theatres is far ſuperior to any others in Europe, where plays only are acted. The great care our performers take in painting for a part, their exactneſs in all the minutiæ of dreſs, and other little ſcenical proprieties, have been taken notice by Ricoboni, a gentleman of Italy, who travelled Europe with no other deſign but to remark upon the ſtage; but there are ſeveral improprieties ſtill continued, or lately come into faſhion. As, for inſtance, ſpreading a carpet punctually at the beginning of the death ſcene, in order to prevent our actors from ſpoiling their cloaths; this immediately apprizes us of the tragedy to follow; for laying the cloth is not a more ſure indication of dinner than laying the carpet of bloody work at Drury-lane. Our little pages alſo with unmeaning faces, that bear up the train of a weeping princeſs, and our aukward lords in waiting, take off much from her diſtreſs. Mutes of every kind divide our attention, and leſſen our ſenſibility; but here it is entirely ridiculous, as we ſee them ſeriouſly employed in doing nothing. If we muſt have dirty-ſhirted guards upon the theatres, they ſhould be taught to keep their eyes fixed on the actors, and not roll them round upon the audience, as if they were ogling the boxes.

Beauty methinks ſeems a requiſite qualification in an actreſs. This ſeems ſcrupulouſly obſerved elſewhere, and for my part I could wiſh to ſee it obſerved at home. I can never conceive an hero dying for love of a lady totally deſtitute of beauty. I muſt think the part unnatural, for I cannot bear to hear him call that face angelic, when even paint cannot hide its wrinkles. I muſt condemn him of ſtupidity, and the perſon whom I can accuſe for want of taſte will ſeldom become the object of my affections or admiration. But if this be a defect, what muſt be the entire perverſion of ſcenical decorum, when for in-

Digitized by Google

ſtance we ſee an actreſs, that might act the Wapping Landlady without a bolſter, pining in the character of Jane Shore, and while unwieldy with fat endeavouring to convince the audience that ſhe is dying with hunger!

For the future then, I could wiſh that the parts of the young or beautiful were given to performers of ſuitable figures; for I muſt own, I could rather ſee the ſtage filled with agreeable objects, though they might ſometimes bungle a little, than ſee it crowded with withered or mis-ſhapen figures, be their emphaſis, as I think it is called, ever ſo proper. The firſt may have the aukward appearance of new-raiſed troops; but in viewing the laſt I cannot avoid the mortification of fancying myſelf placed in an hoſpital of invalids.

THE STORY OF ALCANDER AND SEPTIMIUS.

TRANSLATED FROM A BYZANTINE HISTORIAN.

ATHENS, even long after the decline of the Roman empire, ſtill continued the ſeat of learning, politeneſs, and wiſdom. The emperors and generals, who in theſe periods of approaching ignorance ſtill felt a paſſion for ſcience, from time to time added to its buildings, or encreaſed its profeſſorſhips. Theodoric, the Oſtrogoth, was of the number; he repaired thoſe ſchools which barbarity was ſuffering to fall into decay, and continued thoſe penſions to men of learning, which avaricious governors had monopolized to themſelves.

In

Digitized by Google

In this city, and about this period, Alcander and Septimius were fellow ſtudents together. The one the moſt ſubtle reaſoner of all the Lyceum; the other the moſt eloquent ſpeaker in the academic grove. Mutual admiration ſoon begot an acquaintance, and a ſimilitude of diſpoſition made them perfect friends. Their fortunes were nearly equal, their ſtudies the ſame, and they were natives of the two moſt celebrated cities in the world; for Alcander was of Athens, Septimius came from Rome.

In this mutual harmony they lived for ſome time together, when Alcander, after paſſing the firſt part of his youth in the indolence of philoſophy, thought at length of entering into the buſy world, and as a ſtep previous to this, placed his affections on Hypatia, a lady of exquiſite beauty. Hypatia ſhewed no diſlike to his addreſſes. The day of their intended nuptials was fixed, the previous ceremonies were performed, and nothing now remained but her being conducted in triumph to the apartment of the intended bridegroom.

An exultation in his own happineſs, or his being unable to enjoy any ſatisfaction without making his friend Septimius a partner, prevailed upon him to introduce his miſtreſs to his fellow ſtudent, which he did with all the gaiety of a man who found himſelf equally happy in friendſhip and love. But this was an interview fatal to the peace of both. Septimius no ſooner ſaw her, but he was ſmit with an involuntary paſſion. He uſed every effort, but in vain, to ſuppreſs deſires at once ſo imprudent and unjuſt. He retired to his apartment in inexpreſſible agony; and the emotions of his mind in a ſhort time became ſo ſtrong, that they brought on a fever, which the phyſicians judged incurable.

During this illneſs Alcander watched him with all the anxiety of fondneſs, and brought his miſtreſs

Digitized by Google

to join in thoſe amiable offices of friendſhip. The ſagacity of the phyſicians, by this means, ſoon diſcovered the cauſe of their patient's diſorder; and Alcander, being apprized of their diſcovery, at length extorted a confeſſion from the reluctant dying lover.

It would but delay the narrative to deſcribe the conflict between love and friendſhip in the breaſt of Alcander on this occaſion; it is enough to ſay, that the Athenians were at this time arrived to ſuch refinement in morals, that every virtue was carried to exceſs. In ſhort, forgetful of his own felicity, he gave up his intended bride, in all her charms, to the young Roman. They were married privately by his connivance; and this unlooked-for change of fortune wrought as unexpected a change in the conſtitution of the now happy Septimius. In a few days he was perfectly recovered, and ſet out with his fair partner for Rome. Here, by an exertion of thoſe talents of which he was ſo eminently poſſeſſed, he in a few years arrived at the higheſt dignities of the ſtate, and was conſtituted the city judge, or prætor.

Mean while Alcander not only felt the pain of being ſeparated from his friend and miſtreſs, but a proſecution was alſo commenced againſt him by the relations of Hypatia, for his having baſely given her up, as was ſuggeſted, for money. Neither his innocence of the crime laid to his charge, nor his eloquence in his own defence was able to withſtand the influence of a powerful party.

He was caſt and condemned to pay an enormous fine. Unable to raiſe ſo large a ſum at the time appointed, his poſſeſſions were confiſcated, himſelf ſtript of the habit of freedom, expoſed in the market-place, and ſold as ſlave to the higheſt bidder.

A merchant of Thrace becoming his purchaſer, Alcander, with ſome other companions of diſtreſs, was carried into the region of deſolation and ſterility.

His

Digitized by Google

His ſtated employment was to follow the herds of an imperious maſter, and his ſkill in hunting was all that was allowed him to ſupply a precarious ſubſiſtence. Condemned to hopeleſs ſervitude, every morning waked him to renewal of famine or toil, and every change of ſeaſon ſerved but to aggravate his unſheltered diſtreſs. Nothing but death or flight was left him, and almoſt certain death was the conſequence of his attempting to fly. After ſome years of bondage, however, an opportunity of eſcaping offered; he embraced it with ardour, and travelling by night, and lodging in caverns by day, to ſhorten a long ſtory, he at laſt arrived in Rome. The day of Alcander's arrival, Septimius ſat in the forum adminiſtering juſtice; and hither our wanderer came, expecting to be inſtantly known, and publickly acknowledged. Here he ſtood the whole day among the crowd, watching the eyes of the judge, and expecting to be taken notice of, but ſo much was he altered by a long ſucceſſion of hardſhips, that he paſſed entirely without notice; and in the evning, when he was going up to the prætor's chair, he was brutally repulſed by the attending lictors. The attention of the poor is generally driven from one ungrateful object to another. Night coming on, he now found himſelf under a neceſſity of ſeeking a place to lie in, and yet knew not where to apply. All emaciated and in rags as he was, none of the citizens would harbour ſo much wretchedneſs, and ſleeping in the ſtreets might be attended with interruption or danger: in ſhort, he was obliged to take up his lodging in one of the tombs without the city, the uſual retreat of guilt, poverty, or deſpair.

In this manſion of horror, laying his head upon an inverted urn, he forgot his miſeries for a while in ſleep; and virtue found on this flinty couch more eaſe than down can ſupply to the guilty.

It

Digitized by Google

It was midnight, when two robbers came to make this cave their retreat, but happening to disagree about the division of their plunder, one of them stabbed the other to the heart, and left him weltering in blood at the entrance. In these circumstances he was found next morning, and this naturally induced a further enquiry. The alarm was spread, the cave was examined, Alcander was found sleeping, and immediately apprehended and accused of robbery and murder. The circumstances against him were strong, and the wretchedness of his appearance confirmed suspicion. Misfortune and he were now so long acquainted, that he at last became regardless of life. He detested a world where he had found only ingratitude, falshood and cruelty, and was determined to make no defence. Thus lowering with resolution, he was dragged, bound with cords, before the tribunal of Septimius. The proofs were positive against him, and he offered nothing in his own vindication; the judge, therefore, was proceeding to doom him to a most cruel and ignominious death, when, as if illumined by a ray from heaven, he discovered, through all his misery, the features, though dim with sorrow, of his long lost, lov'd Alcander. It is impossible to describe his joy and his pain on this strange occasion; happy in once more seeing the person he most loved on earth, distressed at finding him in such circumstances. Thus agitated by contending passions, he flew from his tribunal, and falling on the neck of his dear benefactor, burst into an agony of distress. The attention of the multitude was soon, however, divided by another object. The robber, who had been really guilty, was apprehended selling his plunder, and, struck with a panic, confessed his crime. He was brought bound to the same tribunal, and acquitted every other person of any partnership in his guilt. Need the sequel be related?

Alcander

Digitized by Google

Alcander was acquitted, ſhared the friendſhip and the honours of his friend Septimius, lived afterwards in happineſs and eaſe, and left it to be engraved on his tomb, "That no circumſtances are ſo deſperate, which Providence may not relieve."

A LETTER FROM A TRAVELLER.

My dear WILL, *Cracow*, Aug. 2, 1758.

YOU ſee by the date of my letter that I am arrived in Poland. When will my wanderings be at an end? When will my reſtleſs diſpoſition give me leave to enjoy the preſent hour? When at Lyons, I thought all happineſs lay beyond the Alps; when in Italy, I found myſelf ſtill in want of ſomething, and expected to leave ſolicitude behind me by going into Romelia, and now you find me turning back, ſtill expecting eaſe every where, but where I am. It is now ſeven years ſince I ſaw the face of a ſingle creature who cared a farthing whether I was dead or alive. Secluded from all the comforts of confidence, friendſhip, or ſociety, I feel the ſolitude of an hermit, but not his eaſe.

The prince of *** has taken me in his train, ſo that I am in no danger of ſtarving for this bout. The prince's governor is a rude ignorant pedant, and his tutor a battered rake: thus, between two ſuch characters, you may imagine he is finely inſtructed. I made ſome attempts to diſplay all the little knowledge I had acquired by reading or obſervation; but I find myſelf regarded as an ignorant intruder. The truth is, I ſhall never be able to acquire a power of expreſſing

Digitized by Google

expreſſing myſelf with eaſe in any language but my own; and out of my own country the higheſt character I can ever acquire, is that of being a philoſophic vagabond.

When I conſider myſelf in the country which was once ſo formidable in war, and ſpread terror and deſolation over the whole Roman empire, I can hardly account for the preſent wretchedneſs and puſillanimity of its inhabitants; a prey to every invader; their cities plundered without an enemy; their magiſtrates ſeeking redreſs by complaints, and not by vigour. Every thing conſpires to raiſe my compaſſion for their miſeries, were not my thoughts too buſily engaged by my own. The whole kingdom is in a ſtrange diſorder; when our equipage, which conſiſts of the prince and thirteen attendants, had arrived at ſome towns, there were no conveniencies to be found, and we were obliged to have girls to conduct us to the next. I have ſeen a woman travel thus on horſeback before us for thirty miles, and think herſelf highly paid, and make twenty reverences, upon receiving, with extaſy, about two pence for her trouble. In general we were better ſerved by the women than the men on thoſe occaſions. The men ſeemed directed by a low ſordid intereſt alone; they ſeemed mere machines, and all their thoughts were employed in the care of their horſes. If we gently deſired them to make more ſpeed, they took not the leaſt notice; kind language was what they had by no means been uſed to. It was proper to ſpeak to them in the tones of anger, and ſometimes it was even neceſſary to uſe blows, to excite them to their duty. How different theſe from the common people of England, whom a blow might induce to return the affront ſevenfold! Theſe poor people, however, from being brought up to vile uſage, loſe all the reſpect which they ſhould have for themſelves.

They

Digitized by Google

They have contracted an habit of regarding conſtraint as the great rule of their duty. When they were treated with mildneſs, they no longer continued to perceive a ſuperiority. They fancied themſelves our equals, and a continuance of our humanity might probably have rendered them inſolent; but the imperious tone, menaces, and blows, at once changed their ſenſations and their ideas: their ears and ſhoulders taught their ſouls to ſhrink back into ſervitude, from which they had for ſome moments fancied themſelves diſengaged.

The enthuſiaſm of liberty an Engliſhman feels is never ſo ſtrong, as when preſented by ſuch proſpects as theſe. I muſt own, in all my indigence, it is one of my comforts, (perhaps, indeed, it is my only boaſt) that I am of that happy country; though I ſcorn to ſtarve there; though I do not chooſe to lead a life of wretched dependance, or be an object for my former acquaintance to point at. While you enjoy all the eaſe and elegance of prudence and virtue, your old friend wanders over the world, without a ſingle anchor to hold by, or a friend except you to confide in *. Yours, &c.

A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE LATE

MR. MAUPERTUIS.

MR. MAUPERTUIS, lately deceaſed, was the firſt to whom the Engliſh philoſophers owed their

* The ſequel of this correſpondence to be continued occaſionally. I ſhall alter nothing either in the ſtyle or ſubſtance of theſe letters, and the reader may depend on their being genuine.

being

Digitized by Google

being particularly admired by the reſt of Europe. The romantic ſyſtem of Des Cartes was adapted to the taſte of the ſuperficial and the indolent; the foreign univerſities had embraced it with ardour, and ſuch are ſeldom convinced of their errors 'till all others give up ſuch falſe opinions as untenable. The philoſophy of Newton, and the methaphyſics of Locke, appeared; but, like all new truths, they were at once received with oppoſition and contempt. The Engliſh, it is true, ſtudied, underſtood, and conſequently admired them; it was very different on the Continent. Fontenelle, who ſeemed to preſide over the Republic of Letters, unwilling to acknowledge that all his life had been ſpent in erroneous philoſophy, joined in the univerſal diſapprobation, and the Engliſh philoſophers ſeemed entirely unknown.

Maupertuis, however, made them his ſtudy; he thought he might oppoſe the phyſics of his country, and yet ſtill be a good citizen: he defended our countrymen, wrote in their favour, and at laſt, as he had truth on his ſide, carried his cauſe. Almoſt all the learning of the Engliſh, 'till very lately, was conveyed in the language of France. The writings of Maupertuis ſpread the reputation of his maſter Newton, and by an happy fortune have united his fame with that of our human prodigy.

The firſt of his performances, openly, in vindication of the Newtonian ſyſtem, is his treatiſe entituled, *Sur la figure des Aſtres*, if I remember right; a work at once expreſſive of a deep geometrical knowledge, and the moſt happy manner of delivering abſtruſe ſcience with eaſe. This met with violent oppoſition from a people, though fond of novelty in every thing elſe, yet, however, in matters of ſcience, attached to antient opinions with bigotry. As the old and obſtinate fell away, the youth of France embraced the new opinions, and now ſeem more eager to defend Newton than even his countrymen.

The

Digitized by Google

The oddity of character which great men are ſometimes remarkable for, Maupertuis was not entirely free from. If we can believe Voltaire, he once attempted to caſtrate himſelf; but whether this be true or no, it is certain he was extremely whimſical. Though born to a large fortune, when employed in mathematical enquiries, he diſregarded his perſon to ſuch a degree, and loved retirement ſo much, that he has been more than once put on the liſt of modeſt beggars by the curates of Paris, when he retired to ſome private quarter of the town, in order to enjoy his meditations without interruption. The character given of him by one of Voltaire's antagoniſts, if it can be depended upon, is much to his honour. You, ſays this writer to Mr. Voltaire, you were entertained by the king of Pruſſia as a buffoon, but Maupertuis as a philoſopher. It is certain that the preference which this royal ſcholar gave to Maupertuis was the cauſe of Voltaire's diſagreement with him. Voltaire could not bear to ſee a man, whoſe talents he had no great opinion of, preferred before him as preſident of the royal academy. His *Micromegas* was deſigned to ridicule Maupertuis; and probably it has brought more diſgrace on the author than the ſubject. Whatever abſurdities men of letters have indulged, and how fantaſtical ſoever the modes of ſcience have been, their anger is ſtill more ſubject to ridicule.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, N° II.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1759.

ON DRESS.

FOREIGNERS obſerve that there are no ladies in the world more beautiful, or more ill-dreſſed, than thoſe of England. Our country-women have been compared to thoſe pictures, where the face is the work of a Raphael; but the draperies thrown out by ſome empty pretender, deſtitute of taſte, and entirely unacquainted with deſign.

If I were a poet, I might obſerve, on this occaſion, that ſo much beauty ſet off with all the advantages of dreſs would be too powerful an antagoniſt for the oppoſite ſex, and therefore it was wiſely ordered, that our ladies ſhould want taſte, leſt their admirers ſhould entirely want reaſon.

But to confeſs a truth, I do not find they have a greater averſion to fine cloaths than the women of any other country whatſoever. I cannot fancy that a ſhopkeeper's wife in Cheapſide has a greater tenderneſs for the fortune of her huſband than a citizen's wife in Paris; or that miſs in a boarding-ſchool is more an œconomiſt in dreſs than mademoiſelle in a nunnery.

Although Paris may be accounted the ſoil in which almoſt every faſhion takes its riſe, its influence is never ſo general there as with us. They ſtudy there the happy method of uniting grace and faſhion, and never excuſe a woman for being awkwardly dreſſed, by ſaying her cloaths are made in the mode. A French woman is a perfect architect in dreſs; ſhe

Digitized by Google

never, with Gothic ignorance, mixes the orders; ſhe never tricks out a ſquabby Doric ſhape with Corinthian finery; or, to ſpeak without metaphor, ſhe conforms to general faſhion, only when it happens not to be repugnant to private beauty.

Our ladies, on the contrary, ſeem to have no other ſtandard for grace but the run of the town. If faſhion gives the word, every diſtinction of beauty, complexion, or ſtature ceaſes. Sweeping trains, Pruſſian bonnets, and trollopees, as like each other, as if cut from the ſame piece, level all to one ſtandard. The mall, the gardens, and the playhouſes are filled with ladies in uniform, and their whole appearance ſhews as little variety or taſte as if their cloaths were beſpoke by the colonel of a marching regiment, or fancied by the ſame artiſt who dreſſes the three battalions of guards.

But not only ladies of every ſhape and complexion, but of every age too, are poſſeſſed of this unaccountable paſſion of dreſſing in the ſame manner. A lady of no quality can be diſtinguiſhed from a lady of ſome quality only by the redneſs of her hands; and a woman of ſixty, maſked, might eaſily paſs for her grand-daughter. I remember, a few days ago, to have walked behind a damſel, toſſed out in all the gaiety of fifteen; her dreſs was looſe, unſtudied, and ſeemed the reſult of conſcious beauty. I called up all my poetry on this occaſion, and fancied twenty Cupids prepared for execution in every folding of her white negligee. I had prepared my imagination for an angel's face; but what was my mortification to find that the imaginary goddeſs was no other than my couſin Hannah, four years older than myſelf, and I ſhall be ſixty-two the twelfth of next November.

After the tranſports of our firſt ſalute were over, I could not avoid running my eye over her whole appearance. Her gown was of cambrick, cut ſhort before,

fore, in order to discover an high-heeled shoe, which was buckled almost at the toe. Her cap, if cap it might be called that cap was none, consisted of a few bits of cambrick, and flowers of painted paper stuck on one side of her head. Her bosom, that had felt no hand, but the hand of time, these twenty years, rose suing, but in vain, to be pressed. I could, indeed, have wished her more than an handkerchief of Paris-net to shade her beauties; for, as Tasso says of the rose-bud, *Quanto si mostra men tanto epiu bella*, I should think her's most pleasing when least discovered.

As my cousin had not put on all this finery for nothing, she was at that time sallying out to the park, when I had overtaken her. Perceiving, however, that I had on my best wig, she offered, if I would 'squire her there, to send home the footman. Though I trembled for our reception in public, yet I could not, with any civility, refuse; so to be as gallant as possible, I took her hand in my arm, and thus we marched on together.

When we made our entry at the Park, two antiquated figures, so polite and so tender as we seemed to be, soon attracted the eyes of the company. As we made our way among crowds who were out to shew their finery as well as we, wherever we came I perceived we brought good-humour in our train. The polite could not forbear smiling, and the vulgar burst out into a horse laugh at our grotesque figures. Cousin Hannah, who was perfectly conscious of the rectitude of her own appearance, attributed all this mirth to the oddity of mine; while I as cordially placed the whole to her account. Thus, from being two of the best-natured creatures alive, before we got half way up the mall, we both began to grow peevish, and like two mice on a string endeavoured to revenge the impertinence of others upon ourselves.

"I am

Digitized by Google

"I am amazed, couſin Jeffery, ſays miſs, that I "can never get you to dreſs like a Chriſtian. I "knew we ſhould have the eyes of the Park upon "us, with your great wig ſo frizzed, and yet ſo beg-"garly, and your monſtrous muff. I hate thoſe odi-"ous muffs." I could have patiently borne a criticiſm on all the reſt of my equipage; but as I had always a peculiar veneration for my muff, I could not forbear being piqued a little; and throwing my eyes with a ſpiteful air on her boſom, "I could heartily wiſh, "madam, replied I, that, for your ſake, my muff was "cut into a tippet."

As my couſin by this time was grown heartily aſhamed of her gentleman uſher, and as I was never very fond of any kind of exhibition myſelf, it was mutually agreed to retire for a while to one of the ſeats, and from that retreat remarked on others as freely as they had remarked on us.

When ſeated we continued ſilent for ſome time, employed in very different ſpeculations. I regarded the whole company, now paſſing in review before me, as drawn out merely for my amuſement. For my entertainment the beauty had all that morning been improving her charms, the beau had put on lace, and the young doctor a big wig, merely to pleaſe me. But quite different were the ſentiments of couſin Hannah; ſhe regarded every well-dreſſed woman as a victorious rival, hated every face that ſeemed dreſſed in good humour, or wore the appearance of greater happineſs than her own. I perceived her uneaſineſs, and attempted to leſſen it, by obſerving that there was no company in the Park to-day. To this ſhe readily aſſented; "and yet, ſays ſhe, "it is full enough of ſcrubs of one kind or another." My ſmiling at this obſervation gave her ſpirits to purſue the bent of her inclination, and now ſhe began to exhibit her ſkill in ſecret hiſtory, as ſhe found me diſpoſed to liſten. "Obſerve, "ſays ſhe to me," that

Digitized by Google

" old woman in tawdry ſilk, and dreſſed out even " beyond the faſhion. That is miſs Biddy Ever- " green. Miſs Biddy, it ſeems, has money, and ſhe " conſiders that money was never ſo ſcarce as it is " now, ſhe ſeems reſolved to keep what ſhe has to " herſelf. She is ugly enough you ſee; yet I aſ- " ſure you, ſhe has refuſed ſeveral offers to my " own knowledge, within this twelvemonth. Let " me ſee, three gentlemen from Ireland who ſtudy " the law, two waiting captains, her doctor, and a " Scotch preacher, who had like to have carried " her off. All her time is paſſed between ſickneſs " and finery. Thus ſhe ſpends the whole week in a " cloſe chamber, with no other company but her " monkey, her apothecary, and cat, and comes dreſſed " out to the Park every Sunday, to ſhew her airs, " to get new lovers, to catch a new cold, and to " make new work for the doctor.

" There goes Mrs. Roundabout, I mean the fat " lady in the luteſtring trollopee. Between you and " I, ſhe is but a cutler's wife. See how ſhe's dreſſed " as fine as hands and pins can make her, while her " two marriageable daughters, like bunters, in ſtuff " gowns, are now taking ſix pennyworh of tea at " the White-conduit-houſe. Odious puſs! how ſhe " waddles along, with her train two yards behind her! " She puts me in mind of my lord Bantam's Indian " ſheep, which are obliged to have their monſtrous " tails trundled along in a go-cart. For all her airs, " it goes to her huſband's heart to ſee four yards of " good luteſtring wearing againſt the ground, like " one of his knives on a grindſtone. To ſpeak my " mind, couſin Jeffery, I never liked tails; for ſup- " poſe a young fellow ſhould be rude, and the lady " ſhould offer to ſtep back in a fright, inſtead of re- " tiring, ſhe treads upon her train, and falls fairly " on her back; and then you know, couſin, — her " cloaths may be ſpoiled.

" Ah!

Digitized by Google

"Ah! miſs Mazzard! I knew we ſhould not "miſs her in the Park; ſhe in the monſtrous Pruſ- "ſian bonnet. Miſs, though ſo very fine, was bred "a milliner, and might have had ſome cuſtom if ſhe "had minded her buſineſs; but the girl was fond of "finery, and inſtead of dreſſing her cuſtomers, laid "out all her goods in adorning herſelf. Every new "gown ſhe put on impaired her credit; ſhe ſtill, "however, went on improving her appearance, "and leſſening her little fortune, and is now, you "ſee, become a belle and a bankrupt."

My couſin was proceeding in her remarks, which were interrupted by the approach of the very lady ſhe had been ſo freely deſcribing. Miſs had perceived her at a diſtance, and approached to ſalute her. I found, by the warmth of the two ladies proteſtations, that they had been long intimate eſteemed friends and acquaintance. Both were ſo pleaſed at this happy rencounter, that they were reſolved not to part for the day. So we all croſſed the park together, and I ſaw them in a hackney coach at the gate of St. James's. I could not, however, help obſerving, "That they are generally moſt ridicu- "lous themſelves, who are apt to ſee moſt ridicule in "others."

SOME PARTICULARS RELATIVE TO CHARLES XII.

NOT COMMONLY KNOWN.

SIR, *Stockholm.*

I CANNOT reſiſt your ſolicitations, though it is poſſible I ſhall be unable to ſatisfy your curioſity.

Digitized by Google

The polite of every country ſeem to have but one character. A gentleman of Sweden differs but little, except in trifles, from one of any other country. It is among the vulgar we are to find thoſe diſtinctions which characterize a people, and from them it is that I take my picture of the Swedes.

Though the Swedes in general appear to languiſh under oppreſſion, which often renders others wicked, or of malignant diſpoſitions, it has not, however, the ſame influence upon them, as they are faithful, civil, and incapable of atrocious crimes. Would you believe that in Sweden highway robberies are not ſo much as heard of? for my part I have not in the whole country ſeen a gibbet or a gallows. They pay an infinite reſpect to their eccleſiaſtics, whom they ſuppoſe to be the privy counſellors of Providence, who, on their part, turn this credulity to their own advantage, and manage their pariſhioners as they pleaſe. In general, however, they ſeldom abuſe their ſovereign authority. Hearkened to as oracles, regarded as the diſpenſers of eternal rewards and puniſhments, they readily influence their hearers into juſtice, and make them practical philoſophers without the pains of ſtudy.

As to their perſons they are perfectly well made, and the men particularly have a very engaging air. The greateſt part of the boys which I ſaw in the country had very white hair. They were as beautiful as Cupids, and there was ſomething open and entirely happy in their little chubby faces. The girls, on the contrary, have neither ſuch fair, nor ſuch even complexions, and their features are much leſs delicate, which is a circumſtance different from that of almoſt every other country. Beſides this, it is obſerved that the women are generally afflicted with the itch, for which Scania is particularly remarkable. I had an inſtance of this in one of the inns on the

Digitized by Google

the road. The hoſteſs was one of the moſt beautiful women I have ever ſeen; ſhe had ſo fine a complexion, that I could not avoid admiring it. But what was my ſurprize, when ſhe opened her boſom in order to ſuckle her child, to perceive that ſeat of delight all covered with this diſagreeable diſtemper. The careleſs manner in which ſhe expoſed to our eyes ſo diſguſting an object, ſufficiently teſtifies that they regard it as no very extraordinary malady, and ſeem to take no pains to conceal it. Such are the remarks, which probably you may think trifling enough, I have made in my journey to Stockholm, which, to take it all together, is a large, beautiful, and even a populous city.

The arſenal appears to me one of its greateſt curioſities; it is an handſome ſpacious building, but however ſcantily ſupplied with the implements of war. To recompence this defect, they have almoſt filled it with trophies, and other marks of their former military glory. I ſaw there ſeveral chambers filled with Daniſh, Saxon, Poliſh, and Ruſſian ſtandards. There was at leaſt enough to ſuffice half a dozen armies; but new ſtandards are more eaſily made than new armies can be enliſted. I ſaw, beſides, ſome very rich furniture, and ſome of the crown jewels of great value; but what principally engaged my attention, and touched me with paſſing melancholy, were the bloody, yet precious ſpoils of the two greateſt heroes the North ever produced. What I mean are the cloaths in which the great Guſtavus Adolphus, and the intrepid Charles XII. died, by a fate not unuſual to kings. The firſt, if I remember, is a ſort of a buff waiſtcoat, made antique faſhion, very plain, and without the leaſt ornaments; the ſecond, which was even more remarkable, conſiſted only of a coarſe blue cloath coat, a large hat of leſs value, a ſhirt of coarſe linen, large boots, and

Digitized by Google

buff gloves made to cover a great part of the arm. His ſaddle, his piſtols, and his ſword, have nothing in them remarkable, the meaneſt ſoldier was in this reſpect no way inferior to his gallant monarch. I ſhall uſe this opportunity to give you ſome particulars of the life of a man already ſo well known, which I had from perſons who knew him when a child, and who now, by a fate not unuſual to courtiers, ſpend a life of poverty and retirement, and talk over in raptures all the actions of their old victorious king, companion and maſter.

Courage and inflexible conſtancy formed the baſis of this monarch's character. In his tendereſt years he gave inſtances of both. When he was yet ſcarcely ſeven years old, being at dinner with the queen his mother, intending to give a bit of bread to a great dog he was fond of, this hungry animal ſnapt too greedily at the morſel, and bit his hand in a terrible manner. The wound bled copiouſly, but our young hero, without offering to cry, or taking the leaſt notice of his misfortune, endeavoured to conceal what had happened, leſt his dog ſhould be brought into trouble, and wrapped his bloody hand in the napkin. The queen perceiving that he did not eat, aſked him the reaſon. He contented himſelf with replying, that he thanked her, he was not hungry. They thought he was taken ill, and ſo repeated their ſolicitations. But all was in vain, though the poor child was already grown pale with the loſs of blood. An officer who attended at table, at laſt perceived it; for Charles would ſooner have died than betrayed his dog, who he knew intended no injury.

At another time when in the ſmall-pox, and his caſe appeared dangerous, he grew one day very uneaſy in his bed, and a gentleman who watched him, deſirous of covering him up cloſe, received from the patient a violent box on his ear. Some hours after obſerving

Digitized by Google

obſerving the prince more calm, he entreated to know how he had incurred his diſpleaſure, or what he had done to have merited a blow. A blow, replied Charles, I don't remember any thing of it; I remember, indeed, that I thought myſelf in the battle of Arbela, fighting for Darius, where I gave Alexander a blow, which brought him to the ground.

What great effects might not theſe two qualities of courage and conſtancy have produced, had they at firſt received a juſt direction. Charles, with proper inſtructions, thus naturally diſpoſed, would have been the delight and the glory of his age. Happy thoſe princes, who are educated by men who are at once virtuous and wiſe, and have been for ſome time in the ſchool of affliction; who weigh happineſs againſt glory, and teach their royal pupils the real value of fame; who are ever ſhewing the ſuperior dignity of man to that of royalty; that a peaſant who does his duty is a nobler character than a king of even middling reputation. Happy, I ſay, were princes, could ſuch men be found to inſtruct them; but thoſe to whom ſuch an education is generally intruſted, are men who themſelves have acted in a ſphere too high to know mankind. Puffed up themſelves with the ideas of falſe grandeur, and meaſuring merit by adventitious circumſtances of greatneſs, they generally communicate thoſe fatal prejudices to their pupils, confirm their pride by adulation, or encreaſe their ignorance by teaching them to deſpiſe that wiſdom which is found among the poor.

But not to moralize when I only intend a ſtory; what is related of the journeys of this prince is no leſs aſtoniſhing. He has ſometimes been on horſeback for four and twenty hours ſucceſſively, and thus traverſed the greateſt part of his kingdom. At laſt

Digitized by Google

laſt none of his officers were found capable of following him; he thus conſequently rode the greateſt part of his journeys quite alone, without taking a moment's repoſe, and without any other ſubſiſtence but a bit of bread. In one of theſe rapid courſes he underwent an adventure ſingular enough. Riding thus poſt one day, all alone, he had the misfortune to have his horſe fall dead under him. This might have embarraſſed an ordinary man, but it gave Charles no ſort of uneaſineſs. Sure of finding another horſe, but not equally ſo of meeting with a good ſaddle and piſtols, he ungirds his horſe, claps the whole equipage on his own back, and thus accoutred marches on to the next inn, which by good fortune was not far off. Entering the ſtable, he here found an horſe entirely to his mind; ſo, without further ceremony, he clapped on his ſaddle and houſing with great compoſure, and was juſt going to mount, when the gentleman, who owned the horſe, was apprized of a ſtranger's going to ſteal his property out of the ſtable. Upon aſking the king, whom he had never ſeen, bluntly, how he preſumed to meddle with his horſe, Charles coolly replied, ſqueezing in his lips, which was his uſual cuſtom, that he took the horſe becauſe he wanted one; for you ſee, continued he, if I have none, I ſhall be obliged to carry the ſaddle myſelf. This anſwer did not ſeem at all ſatisfactory to the gentleman, who inſtantly drew his ſword. In this the king was not much behind hand with him, and to it they were going, when the guards by this time came up, and teſtified that ſurprize which was natural to ſee arms in the hand of a ſubject againſt his king. Imagine whether the gentleman was leſs ſurpriſed than they at his unpremeditated diſobedience. His aſtoniſhment, however, was ſoon diſſipated by the king, who taking him by the hand, aſſured him he was a brave fellow, and himſelf

Digitized by Google

himſelf would take care he ſhould be provided for. This promiſe was afterwards fulfilled; and I have been aſſured the king made him a captain.

HAPPINESS,

IN A GREAT MEASURE,

DEPENDENT ON CONSTITUTION.

WHEN I reflect on the unambitious retirement in which I paſſed the earlier part of my life in the country, I cannot avoid feeling ſome pain in thinking that thoſe happy days are never to return. In that retreat all Nature ſeemed capable of affording pleaſure; I then made no refinements on happineſs, but could be pleaſed with the moſt aukward efforts of ruſtic mirth; thought croſs-purpoſes the higheſt ſtretch of human wit, and queſtions and commands the moſt rational amuſement for ſpending the evening. Happy could ſo charming an illuſion ſtill continue. I find age and knowledge only contribute to ſour our diſpoſitions. My preſent enjoyments may be more refined, but they are infinitely leſs pleaſing. The pleaſure Garrick gives can no way compare to that I have received from a country wag, who imitated a Quaker's ſermon. The muſic of Matei is diſſonance to what I felt when our old dairy-maid ſung me into tears with Johnny Armſtrong's Laſt Good Night, or the Cruelty of Barbara Allen.

Writers of every age have endeavoured to ſhew that pleaſure is in us, and not in the objects offered for our amuſement. If the ſoul be happily diſpoſed, every thing becomes a ſubject of entertainment, and diſtreſs will almoſt want a name. Every occurrence paſſes

Digitized by Google

paſſes in review like the figures of a proceſſion; ſome may be aukward, others ill-dreſſed; but none but a fool is for this enraged with the maſter of the ceremonies.

I remember to have once ſeen a ſlave in a fortification in Flanders, who appeared no way touched with his ſituation. He was maimed, deformed, and chained; obliged to toil from the appearance of day 'till night-fall, and condemned to this for life; yet, with all theſe circumſtances of apparent wretchedneſs, he ſung, would have danced, but that he wanted a leg, and appeared the merrieſt, happieſt man of all the garriſon. What a practical philoſopher was here; an happy conſtitution ſupplied philoſophy, and though ſeemingly deſtitute of wiſdom, he was really wiſe. No reading or ſtudy had contributed to diſenchant the fairy land around him. Every thing furniſhed him with an opportunity of mirth; and though ſome thought him from his inſenſibility a fool, he was ſuch an idiot as philoſophers might wiſh in vain to imitate.

They, who like him can place themſelves on that ſide of the world, in which every thing appears in a ridiculous or pleaſing light, will find ſomething in every occurrence to excite their good humour. The moſt calamitous events, either to themſelves or others, can bring no new affliction; the whole world is to them a theatre, on which comedies only are acted. All the buſtle of heroiſm, or the rants of ambition, ſerve only to heighten the abſurdity of the ſcene, and make the humour more poignant. They feel, in ſhort, as little anguiſh at their own diſtreſs, or the complaints of others, as the undertaker, though dreſſed in black, feels ſorrow at a funeral.

Of all the men I ever read of, the famous Cardinal De Retz poſſeſſed this happineſs of temper in the higheſt degree. As he was a man of gallantry, and deſpiſed

Digitized by Google

deſpiſed all that wore the pedantic appearance of philoſophy, wherever pleaſure was to be ſold, he was generally foremoſt to raiſe the auction. Being an univerſal admirer of the fair ſex, when he found one lady cruel, he generally fell in love with another, from whom he expected a more favourable reception: if ſhe too rejected his addreſſes, he never thought of retiring into deſarts, or pining in hopeleſs diſtreſs. He perſuaded himſelf, that inſtead of loving the lady, he only fancied he had loved her, and ſo all was well again. When fortune wore her angrieſt look, when he at laſt fell into the power of his moſt deadly enemy Cardinal Mazarine, and was confined a cloſe priſoner in the caſtle of Valenciennes, he never attempted to ſupport his diſtreſs by wiſdom or philoſophy, for he pretended to neither. He laughed at himſelf and his perſecutor, and ſeemed infinitely pleaſed at his new ſituation. In this manſion of diſtreſs, though ſecluded from his friends, though denied all the amuſements, and even the conveniencies of life, teized every hour by the impertinence of wretches who were employed to guard him, he ſtill retained his good humour, laughed at all their little ſpite, and carried the jeſt ſo far as to be revenged, by writing the life of his gaoler.

All that philoſophy can teach, is to be ſtubborn or ſullen under misfortunes. The Cardinal's example will inſtruct us to be merry in circumſtances of the higheſt affliction. It matters not whether our good humour be conſtrued by others into inſenſibility, or even idiotiſm; it is happineſs to ourſelves, and none but a fool would meaſure his ſatisfaction by what the world thinks of it.

Dick Wildgooſe was one of the happieſt ſilly fellows I ever knew. He was of the number of thoſe good natured creatures that are ſaid to do no harm to any but themſelves. Whenever Dick fell into any

Digitized by Google

any misery, he usually called it *seeing life*. If his head was broke by a chairman, or his pocket picked by a sharper, he comforted himself by imitating the Hibernian dialect of the one, or the more fashionable cant of the other. Nothing came amiss to Dick. His inattention to money matters had incensed his father to such a degree, that all the intercession of friends in his favour was fruitless. The old gentleman was on his death-bed. The whole family, and Dick among the number, gathered round him. I leave my second son Andrew, said the expiring miser, my whole estate, and desire him to be frugal. Andrew, in a sorrowful tone, as is usual on these occasions, "Prayed heaven to prolong his life and "health to enjoy it himself." I recommend Simon, my third son, to the care of his elder brother, and leave him beside four thousand pounds. Ah! father, cried Simon, (in great affliction to be sure) "May heaven give you life and health to enjoy it "yourself!" At last, turning to poor Dick; as for you, you have always been a sad dog, you'll never come to good, you'll never be rich, I'll leave you a shilling to buy an halter. Ah! father, cries Dick, without any emotion, "May heaven give "you life and health to enjoy it yourself!" This was all the trouble the loss of fortune gave this thoughtless imprudent creature. However, the tenderness of an uncle recompenced the neglect of a father; and Dick is not only excessively good-humoured, but competently rich.

The world, in short, may cry out at a bankrupt who appears at a ball; at an author who laughs at the public which pronounces him a dunce; at a general who smiles at the reproach of the vulgar, or the lady who keeps her good-humour in spite of scandal; but such is the wisest behaviour they can possibly assume; it is certainly a better way to oppose calamity by dissipation,

Digitized by Google

pation, than to take up the arms of reaſon or reſolution to oppoſe it: by the firſt method we forget our miſeries, by the laſt we only conceal them from others; by ſtruggling with misfortunes, we are ſure to receive ſome wounds in the conflict. The only method to come off victorious, is by running away.

ON OUR THEATRES.

MADEMOISELLE CLAIRON, a celebrated actreſs at Paris, ſeems to me the moſt perfect female figure I have ever ſeen upon any ſtage. Not, perhaps, that Nature has been more liberal of perſonal beauty to her, than ſome to be ſeen upon our theatres at home. There are actreſſes here who have as much of what connoiſſeurs call ſtatuary grace, by which is meant elegance unconnected with motion, as ſhe; but they all fall infinitely ſhort of her, when the ſoul comes to give expreſſion to the limbs, and animates every feature.

Her firſt appearance is exceſſively engaging; ſhe never comes in ſtaring round upon the company, as if ſhe intended to count the benefits of the houſe, or at leaſt to ſee, as well as be ſeen. Her eyes are always, at firſt, intently fixed upon the perſons of the drama, and ſhe lifts them by degrees, with enchanting diffidence, upon the ſpectators. Her firſt ſpeech, or at leaſt the firſt part of it, is delivered with ſcarcely any motion of the arm; her hands and her tongue never ſet out together; but the one prepares us for the other. She ſometimes begins with a mute eloquent attitude; but never goes forward all at once with hands, eyes, head, and voice. This obſervation, though it may appear of no importance, ſhould

Digitized by Google

certainly be adverted to; nor do I see any one performer (Garrick only excepted) among us, that is not in this particular apt to offend. By this simple beginning she gives herself a power of rising in the passion of the scene. As she proceeds, every gesture, every look acquires new violence, till at last transported, she fills the whole vehemence of the part, and all the idea of the poet.

Her hands are not alternately stretched out, and then drawn in again, as with the singing women at Sadler's Wells; they are employed with graceful variety, and every moment please with new and unexpected eloquence. Add to this, that their motion is generally from the shoulder; she never flourishes her hands while the upper part of her arm is motionless, nor has she the ridiculous appearance, as if her elbows were pinned to her hips.

But of all the cautions to be given to our rising actresses, I would particularly recommend it to them never to take notice of the audience, upon any occasion whatsoever; let the spectators applaud never so loudly, their praises should pass, except at the end of the epilogue, with seeming inattention. I can never pardon a lady on the stage who, when she draws the admiration of the whole audience, turns about to make them a low courtsey for their applause. Such a figure no longer continues Belvidera, but at once drops into Mrs. Cibber. Suppose a sober tradesman, who once a year takes his shilling's worth at Drury-lane, in order to be delighted with the figure of a queen, the queen of Sheba for instance, or any other queen: this honest man has no other idea of the great but from their superior pride and impertinence: suppose such a man placed among the spectators, the first figure that appears on the stage is the queen herself, courtesying and cringing to all the company; how can he fancy her the

Digitized by Google

the haughty favourite of king Solomon the wife, who appears actually more ſubmiſſive than the wife of his boſom. We are all tradeſmen of a nicer reliſh in this reſpect, and ſuch conduct muſt diſguſt every ſpectator who loves to have the illuſion of Nature ſtrong upon him.

Yet, while I recommend to our actreſſes a ſkilful attention to geſture, I would not have them ſtudy it in the looking-glaſs. This, without ſome precaution, will render their action formal; by too great an intimacy with this they become ſtiff and affected. People ſeldom improve, when they have no other model but themſelves to copy after. I remember to have known a notable performer of the other ſex, who made great uſe of this flattering monitor, and yet was one of the ſtiffeſt figures I ever ſaw. I am told his appartment was hung round with looking-glaſs, that he might ſee his perſon twenty times reflected upon entering the room; and I will make bold to ſay, he ſaw twenty very ugly fellows whenever he did ſo.

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, N° III.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1759.

ON THE USE OF LANGUAGE.

THE manner in which moſt writers begin their treatiſes on the Uſe of Language is generally thus: "Language has been granted to man, in order to "diſcover his wants and neceſſities, ſo as to have "them relieved by ſociety. Whatever we deſire, "whatever we wiſh, it is but to cloath thoſe de- "ſires or wiſhes in words, in order to fruition; "the principal uſe of language, therefore, ſay they, "is to expreſs our wants, ſo as to receive a ſpeedy "redreſs."

Such an account as this may ſerve to ſatisfy grammarians and rhetoricians well enough, but men who know the world maintain very contrary maxims; they hold, and I think with ſome ſhew of reaſon, that he who beſt knows how to conceal his neceſſity and deſires, is the moſt likely perſon to find redreſs and that the true uſe of ſpeech is not ſo much to expreſs our wants as to conceal them.

When we reflect on the manner in which mankind generally confer their favours, we ſhall find that they who ſeem to want them leaſt, are the very perſons who moſt liberally ſhare them. There is ſomething ſo attractive in riches, that the large heap generally collects from the ſmaller; and the poor find as much pleaſure in increaſing the enormous maſs, as the miſer, who owns it, ſees happi-

Digitized by Google

neſs in its increaſe Nor is there in this any thing repugnant to the laws of true morality. Seneca himſelf allows, that in conferring benefits, the preſent ſhould always be ſuited to the dignity of the receiver. Thus the rich receive large preſents, and are thanked for accepting them. Men of middling ſtations are obliged to be content with preſents ſomething leſs; while the beggar, who may be truly ſaid to want indeed, is well paid if a farthing rewards his warmeſt ſolicitations.

Every man who has ſeen the world, and has had his *ups and downs in life*, as the expreſſion is, muſt have frequently experienced the truth of this doctrine, and muſt know that to have much, or to ſeem to have it, is the only way to have more. Ovid finely compares a man of broken fortune to a falling column; the lower it ſinks, the greater weight it is obliged to ſuſtain. Thus, when a man has no occaſion to borrow, he finds numbers willing to lend him. Should he aſk his friend to lend him an hundred pounds, it is poſſible from the largeneſs of his demand, he may find credit for twenty; but ſhould he humbly only ſue for a trifle, it is two to one whether he might be truſted for two pence. A certain young fellow at George's, whenever he had occaſion to aſk his friend for a guinea, uſed to prelude his requeſt as if he wanted two hundred, and talked ſo familiarly of large ſums, that none could ever think he wanted a ſmall one. The ſame gentleman, whenever he wanted credit for a new ſuit from his taylor, always made a propoſal in laced cloaths; for he found by experience, that if he appeared ſhabby on theſe occaſions, Mr. Lynch had taken an oath againſt truſting; or what was every bit as bad, his foreman was out of the way, and would not be at home theſe two days.

There can be no inducement to reveal our wants, except to find pity, and by this means relief; but

Digitized by Google

before a poor man opens his mind in ſuch circumſtances, he ſhould firſt conſider whether he is contented to loſe the eſteem of the perſon he ſolicits, and whether he is willing to give up friendſhip only to excite compaſſion. Pity and friendſhip are paſſions incompatible with each other, and it is impoſſible that both can reſide in any breaſt for the ſmalleſt ſpace, without impairing each other. Friendſhip is made up of eſteem and pleaſure; pity is compoſed of ſorrow and contempt; the mind may for ſome time fluctuate between them, but it never can entertain both together.

Yet let it not be thought that I would exclude pity from the human mind. There is ſcarcely any who are not in ſome degree poſſeſſed of this pleaſing ſoftneſs; but it is at beſt but a ſhort-lived paſſion, and ſeldom affords diſtreſs more than tranſitory aſſiſtance: with ſome it ſcarcely laſts from the firſt impulſe till the hand can be put into the pocket; with others it may continue for twice that ſpace, and on ſome extraordinary ſenſibility I have ſeen it operate for half an hour. But, however, laſt as it will, it generally produces but beggarly effects; and where from this motive we give an halfpenny, from others we give always pounds. In great diſtreſs we ſometimes, it is true, feel the influence of tenderneſs ſtrongly; when the ſame diſtreſs ſolicits a ſecond time, we then feel with diminiſhed ſenſibility, but like the repetition of an echo, every new impulſe becomes weaker, till at laſt our ſenſations loſe every mixture of ſorrow, and degenerate into downright contempt.

Jack Spindle and I were old acquaintance; but he's gone. Jack was bred in a compting-houſe, and his father dying juſt as he was out of his time, left him an handſome fortune, and many friends to adviſe with. The reſtraint in which he had been brought

Digitized by Google

brought up had thrown a gloom upon his temper, which ſome regarded as an habitual prudence, and from ſuch conſiderations he had every day repeated offers of friendſhip. Thoſe who had money, were ready to offer him their aſſiſtance that way; and they who had daughters, frequently, in the warmth of affection, adviſed him to marry. Jack, however, was in good circumſtances; he wanted neither money, friends, nor a wife, and therefore modeſtly declined their propoſals.

Some errors in the management of his affairs, and ſeveral loſſes in trade, ſoon brought Jack to a different way of thinking; and he at laſt thought it his beſt way to let his friends know that their offers were at length acceptable. His firſt addreſs was therefore to a ſcrivener, who had formerly made him frequent offers of money and friendſhip, at a time when, perhaps, he knew thoſe offers would have been refuſed.

Jack, therefore, thought he might uſe his old friend without any ceremony, and as a man confident of not being refuſed, requeſted the uſe of an hundred guineas for a few days, as he juſt then had an occaſion for money. "And pray, Mr. Spin-"dle, replied the ſcrivener, do you want all this "money?" "Want it, Sir, "ſays the other," if "I did not want it, I ſhould not have aſked it." I "am ſorry for that," ſays the friend; "for thoſe "who want money when they come to borrow, will "want money when they ſhould come to pay. To "ſay the truth, Mr. Spindle, money is money now-"a-days. I believe it is all ſunk in the bottom of "the ſea, for my part; and he that has got a little, "is a fool if he does not keep what he has got."

Not quite diſconcerted by this refuſal, our adventurer was reſolved to apply to another, whom he knew to be the very beſt friend he had in the world. The gentleman whom he now addreſſed, received

Digitized by Google

his propoſal with all the affability that could be expected from generous friendſhip. "Let me ſee, you "want an hundred guineas, and pray, dear Jack, "would not fifty anſwer." *If you have but fifty to ſpare "Sir, I muſt be contented.* "Fifty to ſpare! I do not "ſay that, for I believe I have but twenty about "me." *Then I muſt borrow the other thirty from ſome "other friend.* "And pray, replied the friend, would "it not be the beſt way to borrow the whole money "from that other friend, and then one note will ſerve "for all, you know? Lord, Mr. Spindle, make no "ceremoney with me at any time; you know I'm your "friend, when you chuſe a bit of dinner or ſo.—— "You, Tom, ſee the gentleman down. You "wont forget to dine with us now and then. Your "very humble ſervant."

Diſtreſſed, but not diſcouraged at this treatment, he was at laſt reſolved to find that aſſiſtance from love, which he could not have from friendſhip. Miſs Jenny Diſmal had a fortune in her own hands, and ſhe had already made all the advances that her ſex's modeſty would permit. He made his propoſal therefore with confidence, but ſoon perceived, "No bankrupt ever found the fair one kind." Miſs Jenny and Maſter Billy Galloon were lately fallen deeply in love with each other, and the whole neighbourhood thought it would ſoon be a match.

Every day now began to ſtrip Jack of his former finery; his cloaths flew piece by piece to the pawnbroker's; and he ſeemed at length equipped in the genuine mourning of antiquity. But ſtill he thought himſelf ſecure from ſtarving, the numberleſs invitations he had received to dine, even after his loſſes, were yet unanſwered; he was therefore now reſolved to accept of a dinner becauſe he wanted one; and in this manner he actually lived among his friends a whole week without being openly affronted. The laſt

Digitized by Google

laſt place I ſaw poor Jack was at the Rev. Dr. Goſling's. He had, as he fancied, juſt nicked the time, for he came in as the cloth was laying. He took a chair without being deſired, and talked for ſome time without being attended to. He aſſured the company, that nothing procured ſo good an appetite as a walk to White Conduit-houſe, where he had been that morning. He looked at the table-cloth, and praiſed the figure of the damaſk, talked of a feaſt where he had been the day before, but that the veniſon was overdone. All this, however, procured the poor creature no invitation, and he was not yet ſufficiently hardened to ſtay without being aſked; wherefore, finding the gentleman of the houſe inſenſible to all his fetches, he thought proper, at laſt, to retire, and mend his appetite by a walk in the Park.

You then, O ye beggars of my acquaintance, whether in rags or lace; whether in Kent-ſtreet or the Mall; whether at Smyrna or St. Giles's; might I adviſe you as a friend, never ſeem in want of the favour which you ſolicit. Apply to every paſſion but pity, for redreſs. You may may find relief from vanity, from ſelf intereſt, or from avarice, but ſeldom from compaſſion. The very eloquence of a poor man is diſguſting; and that mouth which is opened even for flattery, is ſeldom expected to cloſe without a petition.

If then you would ward off the gripe of Poverty, pretend to be a ſtranger to her, and ſhe will at leaſt uſe you with ceremony. Hear not my advice, but that of Offellus. If you be caught dining upon a halfpenny porrenger of peaſe ſoup and potatoes, praiſe the wholeſomeneſs of your frugal repaſt. You may obſerve, that Dr. Cheyne has preſcribed peaſe broth for the gravel; hint that you are not one of thoſe who are always making a god of your belly. If you are obliged to wear a flimſy ſtuff in the midſt of win-

Digitized by Google

ter, be the firſt to remark that ſtuffs are very much worn at Paris. If there be found ſome irreparable defects in any part of your equipage, which cannot be concealed by all the arts of ſitting croſs-legged, coaxing, or derning, ſay, that neither you nor Samſon Gideon were ever very fond of dreſs. Or if you be a philoſopher, hint that Plato or Seneca are the tailors you chooſe to employ; aſſure the company that man ought to be content with a bare covering, ſince what now is ſo much the pride of ſome, was formerly our ſhame. Horace will give you a Latin ſentence fit for the occaſion,

Toga defendere frigus,
Quamvis craſſa, queat,

In ſhort, however caught, do not give up, but aſcribe to the frugality of your diſpoſition what others might be apt to attribute to the narrowneſs of your circumſtances, and appear rather to be a miſer than a beggar. To be poor, and to ſeem poor, is a certain method never to riſe. Pride in the great is hateful, in the wiſe it is ridiculous; *beggarly pride* is the only ſort of vanity I can excuſe.

THE HISTORY OF HYPASIA.

MAN, when ſecluded from ſociety, is not a more ſolitary being than the woman who leaves the duties of her own ſex to invade the privileges of ours. She ſeems, in ſuch circumſtances, like one in baniſhment; ſhe appears like a neutral being between the ſexes; and though ſhe may have the admiration of both, ſhe finds true happineſs from neither.

Of all the ladies of antiquity, I have read of none who was ever more juſtly celebrated than the beauti-

ful

Digitized by Google

ful Hypaſia, the daughter of Leon the philoſopher. This moſt accompliſhed of women was born at Alexandria, in the reign of Theodoſius the younger. Nature was never more laviſh of its gifts than it had been to her, endued as ſhe was with the moſt exalted underſtanding, and the happieſt turn to ſcience. Education completed what Nature had begun, and made her the prodigy not only of her age, but the glory of her ſex.

From her father ſhe learned geometry and aſtronomy; ſhe collected from the converſation and ſchools of the other philoſophers, for which Alexandria was at that time famous, the principles of the reſt of the ſciences.

What cannot be conquered by natural penetration and a paſſion for ſtudy? The boundleſs knowledge, which at that period of time was required to form the character of a philoſopher, no way diſcouraged her; ſhe delivered herſelf up to the ſtudy of Ariſtotle and Plato, and ſoon not one in all Alexandria underſtood ſo perfectly as ſhe all the difficulties of theſe two philoſophers.

But not their ſyſtems alone, but thoſe of every other ſect were quite familiar to her; and to this knowledge ſhe added that of polite learning, and the art of oratory. All the learning which it was poſſible for the human mind to contain, being joined to a moſt enchanting eloquence, rendered this lady the wonder not only of the populace, who eaſily admire, but of philoſophers themſelves, who are ſeldom fond of admiration.

The city of Alexandria was every day crowded with ſtrangers, who came from all parts of Greece and Aſia to ſee and hear her. As for the charms of her perſon, they might not probably have been mentioned, did ſhe not join to a beauty the moſt ſtriking a virtue that might repreſs the moſt aſſuming; and

Digitized by Google

and though in the whole capital, famed for charms, there was not one who could equal her in beauty; though in a city, the resort of all the learning then existing in the world, there was not one who could equal her in knowledge; yet, with such accomplishments Hypasia was the most modest of her sex. Her repuation for virtue was not less than her virtues; and though in a city divided between two factions, though visited by the wits and the philosophers of the age, calumny never dared to suspect her morals, or attempt her character. Both the Christians and the Heathens who have transmitted her history and her misfortunes, have but one voice, when they speak of her beauty, her knowledge, and her virtue. Nay, so much harmony reigns in their accounts of this prodigy of perfection, that, in spite of the opposition of their faith, we should never have been able to judge of what religion was Hypasia, were we not informed, from other circumstances, that she was an heathen. Providence had taken so much pains in forming her, that we are almost induced to complain of its not having endeavoured to make her a Christian; but from this complaint we are deterred by a thousand contrary observations, which lead us to reverence its inscrutable mysteries.

This great reputation, of which she so justly was possessed, was at last, however, the occasion of her ruin.

The person, who then possessed the patriarchate of Alexandria, was equally remarkable for his violence, cruelty, and pride. Conducted by an ill-grounded zeal for the Christian religion, or perhaps desirous of augmenting his authority in the city, he had long meditated the banishment of the Jews. A difference arising between them and the Christians with respect to some public games, seemed to him a proper juncture for putting his ambitious designs into execution.

He

Digitized by Google

He found no difficulty in exciting the people, naturally diſpoſed to revolt. The prefect, who at that time commanded the city, interpoſed on this occaſion, and thought it juſt to put one of the chief creatures of the patriarch to the torture, in order to diſcover the firſt promoter of the conſpiracy. The patriarch enraged at the injuſtice he thought offered to his character and dignity, and piqued at the protection which was offered to the Jews, ſent for the chiefs of the ſynagogue, and enjoined them to renounce their deſigns, upon pain of incurring his higheſt diſpleaſure.

The Jews, far from fearing his menaces, excited new tumults, in which ſeveral citizens had the misfortune to fall. The patriarch could no longer contain; at the head of a numerous body of Chriſtians, he flew to the ſynagogues, which he demoliſhed, and drove the Jews from a city, of which they had been poſſeſſed ſince the times of Alexander the Great. It may be eaſily imagined that the prefect could not behold, without pain, his juriſdiction thus inſulted, and the city deprived of a number of its moſt induſtrious inhabitants.

The affair was therefore brought before the emperor. The patriarch complained of the exceſſes of the Jews, and the prefect of the outrages of the patriarch. At this very juncture, five hundred monks of mount Nitria, imagining the life of their chief to be in danger, and that their religion was threatened in his fall, flew into the city with ungovernable rage, attacked the prefect in the ſtreets, and, not content with loading him with reproaches, wounded him in ſeveral places.

The citizens had by this time notice of the fury of the monks; they, therefore, aſſembled in a body, put the monks to flight, ſeized on him who had been found throwing a ſtone, and delivered him to the

Digitized by Google

the prefect, who cauſed him to be put to death without further delay.

The patriarch immediately ordered the dead body, which had been expoſed to view, to be taken down, procured for it all the pomp and rites of burial, and went even ſo far as himſelf to pronounce the funeral oration, in which he claſſed a ſeditious monk among the martyrs. This conduct was by no merns generally approved of; the moſt moderate even among the Chriſtians perceived and blamed his indiſcretion; but he was now too far advanced to retire. He had made ſeveral overtures towards a reconciliation with the prefect, which not ſucceeding, he bore all thoſe an implacable hatred whom he imagined to have any hand in traverſing his deſigns; but Hypaſia was particularly deſtined to ruin. She could not find pardon, as ſhe was known to have a moſt refined friendſhip for the prefect; wherefore the populace were incited againſt her. *Peter*, a reader of the principal church, one of thoſe vile ſlaves by which men in power are too frequently attended, wretches ever ready to commit any crime which they hope may render them agreeable to their employer; this fellow, I ſay, attended by a crowd of villains, waited for Hypaſia, as ſhe was returning from a viſit, at her own door, ſeized her as ſhe was going in, and dragged her to one of the churches called Ceſarea, where, ſtripping her in a moſt inhuman manner, they exerciſed the moſt inhuman cruelties upon her, cut her into pieces, and burnt her remains to aſhes. Such was the end of Hypaſia, the glory of her own ſex, and the aſtoniſhment of ours.

ON

Digitized by Google

ON JUSTICE AND GENEROSITY.

LYSIPPUS is a man whoſe greatneſs of ſoul the whole world admires. His generoſity is ſuch, that it prevents a demand, and ſaves the receiver the trouble and the confuſion of a requeſt. His liberality alſo does not oblige more by its greatneſs, than by his inimitable grace in giving. Sometimes he even diſtributes his bounties to ſtrangers, and has been known to do good offices to thoſe who profeſſed themſelves his enemies. All the world are unanimous in the praiſe of his generoſity; there is only one ſort of people who complain of his conduct. Lyſippus does not pay his debts.

It is no difficult matter to account for a conduct ſo ſeemingly incompatible with itſelf. There is greatneſs in being generous, and there is only ſimple juſtice in ſatisfying his creditors. Generoſity is the part of a ſoul raiſed above the vulgar. There is in it ſomething of what we admire in heroes, and praiſe with a degree of rapture. Juſtice, on the contrary, is a mere mechanic virtue, fit only for tradeſmen, and what is practiſed by every broker in Change Alley.

In paying his debts a man barely does his duty, and it is an action attended with no ſort of glory. Should Lyſippus ſatisfy his creditors, who would be at the pains of telling it to the world? Generoſity is a virtue of a very different complexion. It is raiſed above duty, and from its elevation attracts the attention, and the praiſes of us little mortals below.

In this manner do men generally reaſon upon juſtice and generoſity. The firſt is deſpiſed, though a virtue eſſential to the good of ſociety; and the other attracts our eſteem, which too frequently proceeds from an impetuoſity of temper, rather directed by vanity than reaſon. Lyſippus is told that his banker

aſks

Digitized by Google

asks a debt of forty pounds, and that a distressed acquaintance petitions for the same sum. He gives it without hesitating to the latter; for he demands as a favour what the former requires as a debt.

Mankind in general are not sufficiently acquainted with the import of the word Justice: it is commonly believed to consist only in a performance of those duties to which the laws of society can oblige us. This I allow is sometimes the import of the word, and in this sense justice is distinguished from equity; but there is a justice still more extensive, and which can be shewn to embrace all the virtues united.

Justice may be defined to be that virtue which impels us to give to every person what is his due. In this extended sense of the word, it comprehends the practice of every virtue which reason prescribes, or society should expect. Our duty to our maker, to each other, and to ourselves, are fully answered, if we give them what we owe them. Thus justice, properly speaking, is the only virtue, and all the rest have their origin in it.

The qualities of candour, fortitude, charity, and generosity, for instance, are not, in their own nature, virtues; and, if ever they deserve the title, it is owing only to justice, which impels and directs them. Without such a moderator candour might become indiscretion, fortitude obstinacy, charity imprudence, and generosity mistaken profusion.

A disinterested action, if it be not conducted by justice, is at best indifferent in its nature, and not unfrequently even turns to vice. The expences of society, of presents, of entertainments, and the other helps to chearfulness, are actions merely indifferent, when not repugnant to a better method of disposing of our superfluities, but they become vicious when they obstruct or exhaust our abilities from a more virtuous disposition of our circumstances.

True

Digitized by Google

True generoſity is a duty as indiſpenſably neceſſary as thoſe impoſed upon us by law. It is a rule impoſed upon us by reaſon, which ſhould be the ſovereign law of a rational being. But this generoſity does not conſiſt in obeying every impulſe of humanity, in following blind paſſion for our guide, and impairing our circumſtances by preſent benefactions, ſo as to render us incapable of future ones.

Miſers are generally characterized as men without honour, or without humanity, who live only to accumulate, and to this paſſion ſacrifice every other happineſs. They have been deſcribed as madmen, who, in the midſt of abundance, baniſh every pleaſure, and make, from imaginary wants, real neceſſities. But few, very few correſpond to this exaggerated picture; and, perhaps, there is not one in whom all theſe circumſtances are found united. Inſtead of this, we find the ſober and the induſtrious branded by the vain and the idle, with this odious appellation. Men who, by frugality and labour, raiſe themſelves above their equals, and contribute their ſhare of induſtry to the common ſtock.

Whatever the vain or the ignorant may ſay, well were it for ſociety had we more of this character amongſt us. In general, theſe cloſe men are found at laſt the true benefactors of ſociety. With an avaricious man we ſeldom loſe in our dealings, but too frequently in our commerce with prodigality.

A French prieſt, whoſe name was Godinot, went for a long time by the name of the Griper. He refuſed to relieve the moſt apparent wretchedneſs, and by a ſkilful management of his vineyard, had the good fortune to acquire immenſe ſums of money. The inhabitants of Rheims, who were his fellow-citizens, deteſted him, and the populace, who ſeldom love a miſer, wherever he went, received him with contempt.

Digitized by Google

tempt. He ſtill, however, continued his former ſimplicity of life, his amazing and unremitted frugality. This good man had long perceived the wants of the poor in the city, particularly, in having no water but what they were obliged to buy at an advanced price; wherefore, that whole fortune, which he had been amaſſing, he laid out in an aqueduct, by which he did the poor more uſeful and laſting ſervice, than if he had diſtributed his whole income in charity every day at his door.

Among men long converſant with books, we too frequently find thoſe miſplaced virtues, of which I have been now complaining. We find the ſtudious animated with a ſtrong paſſion for the great virtues, as they are miſtakenly called, and utterly forgetful of the ordinary ones. The declamations of philoſophy are generally rather exhauſted on theſe ſupererogatory duties, than on ſuch as are indiſpenſably neceſſary. A man, therefore, who has taken his ideas of mankind from ſtudy alone, generally comes into the world with an heart melting at every fictitious diſtreſs. Thus he is induced by miſplaced liberality, to put himſelf into the indigent circumſtances of the perſon he relieves.

I ſhall conclude this paper with the advice of one of the Antients, to a young man whom he ſaw giving away all his ſubſtance to pretended diſtreſs. "It is poſſible, that the perſon you relieve may "be an honeſt man; and I know that you who "relieve him are ſuch. You ſee, then, by your "generoſity, you only rob a man, who is certainly "deſerving, to beſtow it on one who may poſſibly "be a rogue. And while you are unjuſt in reward-"ing uncertain merit, you are doubly guilty by "ſtripping yourſelf."

SOME

Digitized by Google

SOME PARTICULARS

RELATING TO

FATHER FREIJO.

Primus mortales tollere contra
Eſt oculos auſus, primuſque aſſurgere contra.

LUCR.

THE Spaniſh nation has, for many centuries paſt, been remarkable for the groſſeſt ignorance in polite literature, eſpecially in point of natural philoſophy; a ſcience ſo uſeful to mankind, that her neighbours have ever eſteemed it a matter of the greateſt importance, to endeavour by repeated experiments to ſtrike a light out of the chaos, in which truth ſeemed to be confounded. Their curioſity in this reſpect was ſo indifferent, that, though they had diſcovered new worlds, they were at a loſs to explain the phænomena of their own, and their pride ſo unaccountable, that they diſdained to borrow from others that inſtruction, which their natural indolence permitted them not to acquire.

It gives me, however, a ſecret ſatisfaction, to behold an extraordinary genius now exiſting in that nation, whoſe ſtudious endeavours ſeem calculated to undeceive the ſuperſtitious, and inſtruct the ignorant: I mean the celebrated Padre Freijo. In unravelling the myſteries of Nature, and explaining phyſical experiments, he takes an opportunity of diſplaying the concurrence of ſecond cauſes in thoſe very wonders, which the vulgar aſcribe to ſupernatural influence.

An example of this kind happened a few years ago in a ſmall town of the kingdom of Valencia. Paſſing through at the hour of maſs, he alighted

Digitized by Google

from his mule, and proceeded to the pariſh-church, which he found extremely crouded, and there appeared on the faces of the faithful a more than uſual alacrity. The ſun, it ſeems, which had been for ſome minutes under a cloud, had begun to ſhine on a large crucifix, that ſtood on the middle of the altar, ſtudded with ſeveral precious ſtones. The reflexion from theſe, and from the diamond eyes of ſome ſilver ſaints, ſo dazzled the multitude, that they unanimouſly cried out, A miracle! a miracle! whilſt the prieſt at the altar, with ſeeming conſternation, continued his heavenly converſation. Padre Freijo ſoon diſſipated the charm, by tying his handkerchief round the head of one of the ſtatues, for which he was arraigned by the inquiſition; whoſe flames, however, he has had the good fortune hitherto to eſcape.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, N° IV.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1759.

MISCELLANEOUS.

WERE I to measure the merit of my present undertaking by its success, or the rapidity of its sale, I might be led to form conclusions by no means favourable to the pride of an author. Should I estimate my fame by its extent, every Newspaper and Magazine would leave me far behind. Their fame is diffused in a very wide circle, that of some as far as Islington, and some yet farther still: while mine, I sincerely believe, has hardly travelled beyond the sound of Bow bell; and while the works of others fly like unpinioned swans, I find my own move as heavily as a new-plucked goose.

Still, however, I have as much pride as they who have ten times as many readers. It is impossible to repeat all the agreable delusions, in which a disappointed author is apt to find comfort. I conclude, that what my reputation wants in extent, is made up by its solidity. *Minus juvat Gloria lata quam magna.* I have great satisfaction in considering the delicacy and discernment of those readers I have, and in ascribing my want of popularity to the ignorance or inattention of those I have not. All the world may forsake an author, but vanity will never forsake him.

Yet notwithstanding so sincere a confession, I was once induced to show my indignation against the

Digitized by Google

public, by discontinuing my endeavours to please; and was bravely resolved, like Raleigh, to vex them by burning my manuscript in a passion. Upon recollection, however, I considered what set or body of people would be displeased at my rashness. The sun, after so sad an accident, might shine next morning as bright as usual; men might laugh and sing the next day, and transact business as before, and not a single creature feel any regret but myself.

I reflected upon the story of a minister, who in the reign of Charles II. upon a certain occasion, resigned all his posts, and retired into the country in a fit of resentment. But as he had not given the world entirely up with his ambition, he sent a messenger to town, to see how the courtiers would bear his resignation. Upon the messenger's return he was asked whether there appeared any commotion at court? To which he replied, There were very great ones. "Ay, says the minister, I knew my friends "would make a bustle; all petitioning the king for "my restoration, I presume." "No, Sir, replied "the messenger, they are only petitioning his ma-"jesty to be put in your place." In the same manner, should I retire in indignation, instead of having Apollo in mourning, or the Muses in a fit of the spleen; instead of having the learned world apostrophising at my untimely decease, perhaps all Grub-street might laugh at my fall, and self-approving dignity might never be able to shield me from ridicule. In short, I am resolved to write on, if it were only to spite them. If the present generation will not hear my voice, hearken, O posterity, to you I call, and from you I expect redress! What rapture will it not give to have the Scaligers, Daciers, and Warburtons of future times commenting with admiration upon every line I now write, workin gaway those ignorant creatures, who offer to arraign my merit, with

Digitized by Google

with all the virulence of learned reproach. Ay, my friends, let them feel it; call names, never ſpare them; they deſerve it all, and ten times more. I have been told of a critic, who was crucified at the command of another to the reputation of Homer. That, no doubt, was more than poetical juſtice, and I ſhall be perfectly content if thoſe, who criticiſe me, are only clapped in the pillory, kept fifteen days upon bread and water, and obliged to run the gantlope through Paternoſter-row. The truth is, I can expect happineſs from poſterity either way. If I write ill, happy in being forgotten; if well, happy in being remembered with reſpect.

Yet, conſidering things in a prudential light, perhaps I was miſtaken in deſigning my paper as an agreeable relaxation to the ſtudious, or an help to converſation among the gay; inſtead of addreſſing it to ſuch, I ſhould have written down to the taſte and apprehenſion of the many, and ſought for reputation on the broad road. Literary fame I now find like religious, generally begins among the vulgar. As for the polite, they are ſo very polite, as never to applaud upon any account. One of theſe, with a face ſcrewed up into affectation, tells you, that fools may *admire*, but men of ſenſe only *approve*. Thus, leſt he ſhould riſe in rapture at any thing new, he keeps down every paſſion but pride and ſelf-importance; approves with phlegm, and the poor author is damned in the taking a pinch of ſnuff. Another has written a book himſelf, and being condemned for a dunce, he turns a ſort of king's evidence in criticiſm, and now becomes the terror of every offender. A third, poſſeſſed of full-grown reputation, ſhades off every beam of favour from thoſe who endeavour to grow beneath him, and keeps down that merit, which, but for his influence, might riſe into equal eminence. While others, ſtill

Digitized by Google

worſe, peruſe old books for their amuſement, and new books only to condemn; ſo that the publick ſeem heartily ſick of all but the buſineſs of the day, and read every thing now with as little attention as they examine the faces of the paſſing crowd.

From theſe conſiderations I was once determined to throw off all connexions with taſte, and fairly addreſs my countrymen in the ſame engaging ſtyle and manner with other periodical pamphlets, much more in vogue than probably mine ſhall ever be. To effect this, I had thoughts of changing the title into that of the ROYAL BEE, the ANTIGALLICAN BEE, or the BEE'S MAGAZINE. I had laid in a proper ſtock of popular topicks, ſuch as encomiums on the king of Pruſſia, invectives againſt the queen of Hungary and the French, the neceſſity of a militia, our undoubted ſovereignty of the ſeas, reflections upon the preſent ſtate of affairs, a diſſertation upon liberty, ſome ſeaſonable thoughts upon the intended bridge of Black-friars, and an addreſs to Britons. The hiſtory of an old woman, whoſe teeth grew three inches long, an ode upon our victories, a rebus, an acroſtic upon Miſs Peggy P. and a journal of the weather. All this, together with four extraordinary pages of *letter preſs*, a beautiful map of England, and two prints curiouſly coloured from Nature, I fancied might touch their very ſouls. I was actually beginning an addreſs to the people, when my pride at laſt overcame my prudence, and determined me to endeavour to pleaſe by the goodneſs of my entertainment, rather than by the magnificence of my ſign.

The Spectator, and many ſucceeding eſſayiſts, frequently inform us of the numerous compliments paid them in the courſe of their lucubrations; of the frequent encouragements they met to inſpire them with ardour, and encreaſe their eagerneſs to pleaſe. I have received *my letters* as well as they; but alas! not

not congratulatory ones; not aſſuring me of ſucceſs and favour; but pregnant with bodings that might ſhake even fortitude itſelf.

One gentleman aſſures me, he intends to throw away no more three-pences in purchaſing the BEE, and what is ſtill more diſmal, he will not recommend me as a poor author wanting encouragement to his neighbourhood, which it ſeems is very numerous. Were my ſoul ſet upon three-pences, what anxiety might not ſuch a denunciation produce! But ſuch does not happen to be the preſent motive of publication; I write partly to ſhew my good-nature, and partly to ſhew my vanity; nor will I lay down the pen till I am ſatisfied one way or another.

Others have diſliked the title and the motto of my paper, point out a miſtake in the one, and aſſure me the other has been conſigned to dullneſs by anticipation. All this may be true; *but what is that to me?* Titles and mottos to books are like eſcutcheons and dignities in the hands of a king. The wiſe ſometimes condeſcend to *accept* of them; but none but a fool will imagine them of any real importance. We ought to depend upon intrinſic merit, and not the ſlender helps of title. *Nam quæ non fecimus ipſi, vix ea noſtra voco.*

For my part, I am ever ready to miſtruſt a promiſing title, and have, at ſome expence, been inſtructed not to hearken to the voice of an advertiſement, let it plead never ſo loudly, or never ſo long. A countryman coming one day to Smithfield, in order to take a ſlice of Bartholomew-fair, found a perfect ſhew before every booth. The drummer, the fire-eater, the wire-walker, and the ſalt-box were all employed to invite him in. "Juſt a going; the "court of the king of Pruſſia in all his glory; pray, "gentlemen, walk in and ſee." From people who generouſly gave ſo much away, the clown expected

a monſtrous bargain for his money when he got in. He ſteps up, pays his ſixpence, the curtain is drawn, when too late he finds, that he had the beſt part of the ſhew for nothing at the door.

A FLEMISH TRADITION.

EVERY country has its traditions, which, either too minute or not ſufficiently authentic to receive hiſtorical ſanction, are handed down among the vulgar, and ſerve at once to inſtruct and amuſe them. Of this number the adventures of Robin Hood, the hunting of Chevy-chace, and the bravery of Johnny Armſtrong among the Engliſh; of Kaul Dereg among the Iriſh; and Creigton among the Scots, are inſtances. Of all the traditions, however, I remember to have heard, I do not recollect any more remarkable than one ſtill current in Flanders; a ſtory generally the firſt the peaſants tell their children, when they bid them behave like Bidderman the wiſe. It is by no means, however, a model to be ſet before a polite people for imitation; ſince if on the one hand we perceive in it the ſteady influence of patriotiſm; we on the other find as ſtrong a deſire of revenge. But, to wave introduction, let us to the ſtory.

When the Saracens over-ran Europe with their armies, and penetrated as far even as Antwerp, Bidderman was lord of a city, which time has ſince ſwept into deſtruction. As the inhabitants of this country were divided under ſeparate leaders, the Saracens found an eaſy conqueſt, and the city of Bidderman among the reſt became a prey to the victors. Thus

Digitized by Google

Thus diſpoſſeſſed of his paternal city, our unfortunate governor was obliged to ſeek refuge from the neighbouring princes, who were as yet unſubdued, and he for ſome time lived in a ſtate of wretched dependance among them.

Soon, however, his love to his native country brought him back to his own city, reſolved to reſcue it from the enemy, or fall in the attempt: thus, in diſguiſe, he went among the inhabitants, and endeavoured, but in vain, to excite them to a revolt. Former misfortunes lay ſo heavily on their minds, that they rather choſe to ſuffer the moſt cruel bondage, than attempt to vindicate their former freedom.

As he was thus one day employed, whether by information or from ſuſpicion is not known, he was apprehended by a Saracen ſoldier as a ſpy, and brought before the very tribunal at which he once preſided. The account he gave of himſelf was by no means ſatisfactory. He could produce no friends to vindicate his character; wherefore, as the Saracens knew not their priſoner, and as they had no direct proofs againſt him, they were content with condemning him to be publickly whipt as a vagabond.

The execution of this ſentence was accordingly performed with the utmoſt rigour. Bidderman was bound to the poſt, the executioner ſeeming diſpoſed to add to the cruelty of the ſentence, as he received no bribe for lenity. Whenever Bidderman groaned under the ſcourge, the other redoubling his blows, cried out, "Does the villain murmur?" If Bidderman entreated but a moment's reſpite from torture, the other only repeated his former exclamation, "Does the villain murmur?"

From this period revenge as well as patriotiſm took entire poſſeſſion of his ſoul. His fury ſtooped ſo low as to follow the executioner with unremitting reſentment.

Digitized by Google

reſentment. But conceiving that the beſt method to attain theſe ends, was to acquire ſome eminence in the city, he laid himſelf out to oblige its new maſters, ſtudied every art, and practiſed every meanneſs that ſerve to promote the needy, or render the poor pleaſing, and by theſe means in a few years he came to be of ſome note in the city, which juſtly belonged entirely to him.

The executioner was therefore the firſt object of his reſentment, and he even practiſed the loweſt fraud to gratify the revenge he owed him. A piece of plate, which Bidderman had previouſly ſtolen from the Saracen governor, he privately conveyed into the executioner's houſe, and then gave information of the theft. They, who are any way acquainted with the rigour of the Arabian laws, know that theft is puniſhed with immediate death. The proof was direct in this caſe; the executioner had nothing to offer in his own defence, and he was therefore condemned to be beheaded upon a ſcaffold in the publick market place. As there was no executioner in the city but the very man who was now to ſuffer, Bidderman himſelf undertook this, to him moſt agreeable office. The criminal was conducted from the judgement ſeat bound with cords. The ſcaffold was erected, and he placed in ſuch a manner, as he might lie moſt convenient for the blow.

But his death alone was not ſufficient to ſatisfy the reſentment of this extraordinary man, unleſs it was aggravated with every circumſtance of cruelty. Wherefore, coming up the ſcaffold, and diſpoſing every thing in readineſs for the intended blow, with the ſword in his hand he approached the criminal, and whiſpering in a low voice, aſſured him that he himſelf was the perſon that had once been uſed with ſo much cruelty; that to his knowledge he died very innocently, for the plate had been ſtolen by himſelf, and privately conveyed into the houſe of the other.

"O, my

Digitized by Google

"O, my countrymen, cried the criminal, do "you hear what this man ſays?"——*Does the villain murmur?* replied Bidderman, and immediately at one blow ſevered his head from his body.

Still, however, he was not content till he had ample vengeance of the governors of the city, who condemned him. To effect this, he hired a ſmall houſe adjoining to the town wall, under which he every day dug, and carried out the earth in a baſket. In this unremitting labour he continued ſeveral years, every day digging a little, and carrying the earth unſuſpected away. By this means he at laſt made a ſecret communication from the country into the city, and only wanted the appearance of an enemy, in order to betray it. This opportunity at length offered; the French army came into the neighbourhood, but had no thoughts of ſitting down before a town which they conſidered as impregnable. Bidderman, however, ſoon altered their reſolutions, and, upon communicating his plan to the general, he embraced it with ardour. Through the private paſſage above-mentioned, he introduced a large body of the moſt reſolute ſoldiers, who ſoon opened the gates for the reſt, and the whole army ruſhing in, put every Saracen that was found to the ſword.

THE SAGACITY OF SOME INSECTS.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE BEE.

SIR,

ANIMALS in general are ſagacious in proportion as they cultivate ſociety. The elephant and the beaver ſhew the greateſt ſigns of this when united; but

Digitized by Google

but when man intrudes into their communities, they loſe all their ſpirit of induſtry, and teſtify but a very ſmall ſhare of that ſagacity, for which, when in a ſocial ſtate, they are ſo remarkable.

Among inſects, the labours of the bee and the ant have employed the attention and admiration of the naturaliſt; but their whole ſagacity is loſt upon ſeparation, and a ſingle bee or ant ſeems deſtitute of every degree of induſtry, is the moſt ſtupid inſect imaginable, languiſhes for a time in ſolitude, and ſoon dies.

Of all the ſolitary inſects I have ever remarked, the ſpider is the moſt ſagacious, and its actions to me, who have attentively conſidered them, ſeem almoſt to exceed belief. This inſect is formed by Nature for a ſtate of war, not only upon other inſects, but upon each other. For this ſtate Nature ſeems perfectly well to have formed it. Its head and breaſt are covered with a ſtrong natural coat of mail, which is impenetrable to the attempts of every other inſect, and its belly is inveloped in a ſoft pliant ſkin, which eludes the ſting even of a waſp. Its legs are terminated by ſtrong claws, not unlike thoſe of a lobſter, and their vaſt length, like ſpears, ſerve to keep every aſſailant at a diſtance.

Not worſe furniſhed for obſervation than for an attack or a defence, it has ſeveral eyes, large, tranſparent, and covered with an horny ſubſtance, which, however, does not impede its viſion. Beſides this, it is furniſhed with a forceps above the mouth, which ſerves to kill or ſecure the prey already caught in its claws or its net.

Such are the implements of war with which the body is immediately furniſhed; but its net to entangle the enemy ſeems what it chiefly truſts to, and what it takes moſt pains to render as complete as poſſible. Nature has furniſhed the body of this little creature with a glutinous liquid, which proceeding

Digitized by Google

from the anus, it ſpins into thread coarſer or finer, as it chuſes to contract or dilate its ſphincter. In order to fix its thread when it begins to weave, it emits a ſmall drop of its liquid againſt the wall, which hardening by degrees ſerves to hold the thread very firmly. Then receding from the firſt point, as it recedes the thread lengthens; and when the ſpider has come to the place where the other end of the thread ſhould be fixed, gathering up with his claws the thread which would otherwiſe be too ſlack, it is ſtretched tightly, and fixed in the ſame manner to the wall as before.

In this manner it ſpins and fixes ſeveral threads parallel to each other, which, ſo to ſpeak, ſerve as the warp to the intended web. To form the woof, it ſpins in the ſame manner its thread, tranſverſly fixing one end to the firſt thread that was ſpun, and which is always the ſtrongeſt of the whole web, and the other to the wall. All theſe threads, being newly ſpun, are glutinous, and therefore ſtick to each other wherever they happen to touch, and in thoſe parts of the web moſt expoſed to be torn, our natural artiſt ſtrengthens them, by doubling the threads ſometimes ſix fold.

Thus far naturaliſts have gone in the deſcription of this animal; what follows is the reſult of my own obſervation upon that ſpecies of the inſect called an *Houſe-Spider*. I perceived about four years ago, a large ſpider in one corner of my room, making its web, and though the maid frequently levelled her fatal broom againſt the labours of the little animal, I had the good fortune then to prevent its deſtruction, and I may ſay, it more than paid me by the entertainment it afforded.

In three days the web was with incredible diligence completed; nor could I avoid thinking that the inſect ſeemed to exult in its new abode. It frequently traverſed it round, examined the ſtrength of

Digitized by Google

of every part of it, retired into its hole, and came out very frequently. The firſt enemy, however, it had to encounter, was another and a much larger ſpider, which, having no web of its own, and having probably exhauſted all its ſtock in former labours of this kind, came to invade the property of its neighbour. Soon then a terrible encounter enſued, in which the invader ſeemed to have the victory, and the laborious ſpider was obliged to take refuge in its hole. Upon this I perceived the victor uſing every art to draw the enemy from his ſtrong hold. He ſeemed to go off, but quickly returned, and when he found all arts vain, began to demoliſh the new web without merey. This brought on another battle, and, contrary to my expectations, the laborious ſpider became conqueror, and fairly killed his antagoniſt.

Now then, in peaceable poſſeſſion of what was juſtly its own, it waited three days with the utmoſt impatience, repairing the breaches of its web, and taking no ſuſtenance that I could perceive. At laſt, however, a large blue fly fell into the ſnare, and ſtruggled hard to get looſe. The ſpider gave it leave to entangle itſelf as much as poſſible, but it ſeemed to be too ſtrong for the cobweb. I muſt own I was greatly ſurprized when I ſaw the ſpider immediately ſally out, and in leſs than a minute weave a new net round its captive, by which the motion of its wings was ſtopped, and when it was fairly hampered in this manner, it was ſeized, and dragged into the hole.

In this manner it lived, in a precarious ſtate, and Nature ſeemed to have fitted it for ſuch a life, for upon a ſingle fly it ſubſiſted for more than a week. I once put a waſp into the neſt, but when the ſpider came out in order to ſeize it as uſual, upon perceiving what kind of an enemy it had to deal with, it inſtantly broke all the bands that held it faſt, and contributed

Digitized by Google

tributed all that lay in its power to diſengage ſo formidable an antagoniſt. When the waſp was at liberty, I expected the ſpider would have ſet about repairing the breaches that were made in its net, but thoſe it ſeems were irreparable, wherefore the cobweb was now entirely forſaken, and a new one begun, which was completed in the uſual time.

I had now a mind to try how many cobwebs a ſingle ſpider could furniſh, wherefore I deſtroyed this, and the inſect ſet about another. When I deſtroyed the other alſo, its whole ſtock ſeemed entirely exhauſted, and it could ſpin no more. The arts it made uſe of to ſupport itſelf, now deprived of its great means of ſubſiſtence, were indeed ſurpriſing. I have ſeen it roll up its legs like a ball, and lie motionleſs for hours together, but cautiouſly watching all the time; when a fly happened to approach ſufficiently near, it would dart out all at once, and often ſeize its prey.

Of this life, however, it ſoon began to grow weary, and reſolved to invade the poſſeſſion of ſome other ſpider, ſince it could not make a web of its own. It formed an attack upon a neighbouring fortification with great vigour, and at firſt was as vigorouſly repulſed. Not daunted, however, with one defeat, in this manner it continued to lay ſiege to another's web for three days, and at length, having killed the defendant, actually took poſſeſſion. When ſmaller flies happen to fall into the ſnare, the ſpider does not ſally out at once, but very patiently waits till it is ſure of them; for, upon his immediately approaching, the terror of his appearance might give the captive ſtrength ſufficient to get looſe: the manner then is to wait patiently till, by ineffectual and impotent ſtruggles, the captive has waſted all its ſtrength, and then he becomes a certain and eaſy conqueſt.

The

Digitized by Google

The insect I am now describing lived three years; every year it changed its skin, and got a new set of legs. I have sometimes plucked off a leg, which grew again in two or three days. At first it dreaded my approach to its web, but at last it became so familiar as to take a fly out of my hand, and upon my touching any part of the web, would immediately leave its hole, prepared either for a defence or an attack.

To complete this description, it may be observed, that the male spiders are much less than the female, and that the latter are coviparous. When they come to lay, they spread a part of their web under the eggs, and then roll them up carefully, as we roll up things in a cloth, and thus hatch them in their hole. If disturbed in their holes, they never attempt to escape without carrying this young brood in their forceps away with them, and thus frequently are sacrificed to their paternal affection.

As soon as ever the young ones leave their artificial covering, they begin to spin, and almost sensibly seem to grow bigger. If they have the good fortune, when even but a day old, to catch a fly, they fall too with good appetites; but they live sometimes three or four days without any sort of sustenance, and yet still continue to grow larger, so as every day to double their former size. As they grow old, however, they do not still continue to increase, but their legs only continue to grow longer; and when a spider becomes entirely stiff with age, and unable to seize its prey, it dies at length of hunger.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GREATNESS.

IN every duty, in every ſcience in which we would wiſh to arrive at perfection, we ſhould propoſe for the object of our purſuit ſome certain ſtation even beyond our abilities; ſome imaginary excellence, which may amuſe and ſerve to animate our enquiry. In deviating from others, in following an unbeaten road, though we perhaps may never arrive at the wiſhed-for object; yet it is poſſible we may meet ſeveral diſcoveries by the way; and the certainty of ſmall advantages, even while we travel with ſecurity, is not ſo amuſing as the hopes of great rewards, which inſpire the adventurer. *Evenit nonnunquam*, ſays Quintilian, *ut aliquid grande inveniat qui ſemper quærit quod nimium eſt.*

This enterpriſing ſpirit is, however, by no means the character of the preſent age; every perſon who ſhould now leave received opinions, who ſhould attempt to be more than a commentator upon philoſophy, or an imitator in polite learning, might be regarded as a chimerical projector. Hundreds would be ready not only to point out his errors, but to load him with reproach. Our probable opinions are now regarded as certainties; the difficulties hitherto undiſcovered as utterly inſcrutable; and the writers of the laſt age inimitable, and therefore the propereſt models of imitation.

One might be almoſt induced to deplore the philoſophic ſpirit of the age, which in proportion as it enlightens the mind, increaſes its timidity, and repreſſes the vigour of every undertaking. Men are now content with being prudently in the right;

Digitized by Google

which, though not the way to make new acquiſitions, it muſt be owned, is the beſt method of ſecuring what we have. Yet this is certain, that the writer who never deviates, who never hazards a new thought, or a new expreſſion, though his friends may compliment him upon his ſagacity, though criticiſm lifts her feeble voice in his praiſe, will ſeldom arrive at any degree of perfection. The way to acquire laſting eſteem, is not by the fewneſs of a writer's faults, but the greatneſs of his beauties, and our nobleſt works are generally moſt replete with both.

An author, who would be ſublime, often runs his thought into burleſque; yet I can readily pardon his miſtaking ten times for once ſucceeding. True Genius walks along a line, and perhaps our greateſt pleaſure is in ſeeing it ſo often near falling, without being ever actually down.

Every ſcience has its hitherto undiſcovered myſteries, after which men ſhould travel undiſcouraged by the failure of former adventurers. Every new attempt ſerves perhaps to facilitate its future invention. We may not find the Philoſopher's ſtone, but we ſhall probably hit upon new inventions in purſuing it. We ſhall perhaps never be able to diſcover the longitude, yet perhaps we may arrive at new truths in the inveſtigation.

Were any of thoſe ſagacious minds among us, (and ſurely no nation, or no period could ever compare with us in this particular) were any of thoſe minds, I ſay, who now ſit down contented with exploring the intricacies of another's ſyſtem, bravely to ſhake off admiration, and undazzled with the ſplendour of another's reputation, to chalk out a path to fame for themſelves, and boldly cultivate untried experiment, what might not be the reſult of their inquiries, ſhould the ſame ſtudy that has made them wiſe, make them enterpriſing alſo? What

Digitized by Google

could not ſuch qualities united produce? But ſuch is not the character of the Engliſh, while our neighbours of the Continent launch out into the ocean of ſcience, without proper ſtore for the voyage, we fear ſhipwreck in every breeze, and conſume in port thoſe powers, which might probably have weathered every ſtorm.

Projectors in a ſtate are generally rewarded above their deſerts; projectors in the republic of letters, never. If wrong, every inferior dunce thinks himſelf entitled to laugh at their diſappointment; if right, men of ſuperior talents think their honour engaged to oppoſe, ſince every new diſcovery is a tacit diminution of their own pre-eminence.

To aim at excellence, our reputation, our friends, and our all muſt be ventured; by aiming only at mediocrity, we run no riſque, and we do little ſervice. Prudence and greatneſs are ever perſuading us to contrary purſuits. The one inſtructs us to be content with our ſtation, and to find happineſs in bounding every wiſh. The other impels us to ſuperiority, and calls nothing happineſs but rapture. The one directs to follow mankind, and to act and think with the reſt of the world. The other drives us from the crowd, and expoſes us as a mark to all the ſhafts of envy, or ignorance.

Nec minus periculum ex magna fama quam ex mala.

TACIT.

The rewards of mediocrity are immediately paid, thoſe attending excellence generally paid in reverſion. In a word, the little mind who loves itſelf, will write and think with the vulgar, but the great mind will be bravely eccentric, and ſcorn the beaten road, from univerſal benevolence.

Digitized by Google

*** IN this place our author introduces a paper intituled a City Night-piece, with the following motto from Martial,

Ille dolet vere, qui ſine teſte dolet.

This beautiful Eſſay forms the 117th Letter in the Citizen of the World; but Dr. Goldſmith has there omitted the concluding paragraph, which on account of its ſingular merit we ſhall here preſerve.

But let me turn from a ſcene of ſuch diſtreſs to the ſanctified hypocrite, *who has been talking of virtue till the time of bed*, and now ſteals out, to give a looſe to his vices under the protection of midnight; vices more atrocious becauſe he attempts to conceal them. See how he pants down the dark alley, and, with haſtening ſteps, fears an acquaintance in every face. He has paſſed the whole day in company he hates, and now goes to prolong the night among company that as heartily hate him. May his vices be detected! may the morning riſe upon his ſhame! yet I wiſh to no purpoſe; villany, when detected, never gives up, but boldly adds impudence to impoſture.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, N° V.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1759.

UPON POLITICAL FRUGALITY.

FRUGALITY has ever been eſteemed a virtue as well among Pagans as Chriſtians: there have been even heroes who have practiſed it. However, we muſt acknowledge, that it is too modeſt a virtue, or, if you will, too obſcure a one to be eſſential to heroiſm, few heroes have been able to attain to ſuch an height. Frugality agrees much better with politicks; it ſeems to be the baſe, the ſupport, and in a word, ſeems to be the inſeparable companion of a juſt adminiſtration.

However this be, there is not perhaps in the world a people leſs fond of this virtue than the Engliſh, and of conſequence there is not a nation more reſtleſs, more expoſed to the uneaſineſs of life, or leſs capable of providing for particular happineſs. We are taught to deſpiſe this virtue from our childhood, our education is improperly directed, and a man who has gone through the politeſt inſtitutions, is generally the perſon who is leaſt acquainted with the wholeſome precepts of frugality. We every day hear the elegance of taſte, the magnificence of ſome, and the generoſity of others, made the ſubject of our admiration and applauſe. All this we ſee repreſented not as the end and recompenſe of labour and deſert, but as the actual reſult of genius, as the mark of a noble and exalted mind.

Digitized by Google

In the midſt of theſe praiſes beſtowed on luxury, for which elegance and taſte are but another name, perhaps it may be thought improper to plead the cauſe of frugality. It may be thought low, or vainly declamatory, to exhort our youth from the follies of dreſs, and of every other ſuperfluity; to accuſtom themſelves, even with mechanic meanneſs, to the ſimple neceſſaries of life. Such ſort of inſtructions may appear antiquated; yet, however, they ſeem the foundations of all our virtues, and the moſt efficacious method of making mankind uſeful members of ſociety. Unhappily, however, ſuch diſcourſes are not faſhionable among us, and the faſhion ſeems every day growing ſtill more obſolete, ſince the preſs, and every other method of exhortation, ſeems diſpoſed to talk of the luxuries of life as harmleſs enjoyments. I remember, when a boy, to have remarked, that thoſe who in ſchool wore the fineſt cloaths were pointed at as being conceited and proud. At preſent, our little maſters are taught to conſider dreſs betimes, and they are regarded, even at ſchool, with contempt, who do not appear as genteel as the reſt. Education ſhould teach us to become uſeful, ſober, diſintereſted and laborious members of ſociety; but does it not at preſent point out a different path? It teaches us to multiply our wants, by which means we become more eager to poſſeſs, in order to diſſipate, a greater charge to ourſelves, and more uſeleſs or obnoxious to ſociety.

If a youth happens to be poſſeſſed of more genius than fortune, he is early informed that he ought to think of his advancement in the world; that he ſhould labour to make himſelf pleaſing to his ſuperiors; that he ſhould ſhun low company (by which is meant the company of his equals); that he ſhould rather live a little above than below his fortune; that he ſhould think of becoming great; but he finds none

Digitized by Google

none to admoniſh him to become frugal, to perſevere in one ſingle deſign, to avoid every pleaſure and all flattery, which, however, ſeeming to concilitate the favour of his ſuperiors, never conciliate their eſteem. There are none to teach him that the beſt way of becoming happy in himſelf, and uſeful to others, is to continue in the ſtate in which Fortune at firſt placed him, without making too haſty ſtrides to advancement; that greatneſs may be attained, but ſhould not be expected; and that they who moſt impatiently expect advancement, are ſeldom poſſeſſed of their wiſhes. He has few, I ſay, to teach him this leſſon, or to moderate his youthful paſſions, yet, this experience may ſay, that a young man, who but for ſix years of the early part of his life could ſeem diveſted of all his paſſions, would certainly make, or conſiderably increaſe his fortune, and might indulge ſeveral of his favourite inclinations in manhood with the utmoſt ſecurity.

The efficaciouſneſs of theſe means is ſufficiently known and acknowledged; but as we are apt to connect a low idea with all our notions of frugality, the perſon who would perſuade us to it, might be accuſed of preaching up avarice.

Of all vices, however, againſt which morality diſſuades, there is not one more undetermined than this of avarice. Miſers are deſcribed by ſome, as men diveſted of honour, ſentiment or humanity; but this is only an ideal picture, or the reſemblance at leaſt is found but in a few. In truth, they who are generally called miſers, are ſome of the very beſt members of ſociety. The ſober, the laborious, the attentive, the frugal, are thus ſtiled by the gay, giddy, thoughtleſs and extravagant. The firſt ſet of men do ſociety all the good, and the latter all the evil that is felt. Even the exceſſes of the firſt no way injure the commonwealth; thoſe of the latter are the moſt injurious that can be conceived.

Digitized by Google

The ancient Romans, more rational than we in this particular, were very far from thus miſplacing their admiration or praiſe; inſtead of regarding the practice of parſimony as low or vicious, they made it ſynonymous even with probity. They eſteemed thoſe virtues ſo inſeparable, that the known expreſſion of *Vir Frugi* ſignified, at one and the ſame time, a ſober and managing man, an honeſt man, and a man of ſubſtance.

The Scriptures, in a thouſand places, praiſe œconomy; and it is every where diſtinguiſhed from avarice. But in ſpite of all its ſacred dictates, a taſte for vain pleaſures and fooliſh expence is the ruling paſſion of the preſent times. Paſſion did I call it, rather the madneſs which at once poſſeſſes the great and the little, the rich and the poor; even ſome are ſo intent upon acquiring the ſuperfluities of life, that they ſacrifice its neceſſaries in this fooliſh purſuit.

To attempt the entire abolition of luxury, as it would be impoſſible, ſo it is not my intent. The generality of mankind are too weak, too much ſlaves to cuſtom and opinion, to reſiſt the torrent of bad example. But if it be impoſſible to convert the multitude; thoſe who have received a more extended education, who are enlightened and judicious, may find ſome hints on this ſubject uſeful. They may ſee ſome abuſes, the ſuppreſſion of which would by no means endanger public liberty; they may be directed to the abolition of ſome neceſſary expences, which have no tendency to promote happineſs or virtue, and which might be directed to better purpoſes. Our fire-works, our public feaſts and entertainments, our entries of ambaſſadors, &c. what mummery all this; what childiſh pageants! what millions are ſacrificed in paying tribute to cuſtom, what an unneceſſary charge at times when we are preſſed with real want, which cannot be ſatisfied without burthening the poor!

Were

Digitized by Google

Were ſuch ſuppreſſed entirely, not a ſingle creature in the ſtate would have the leaſt cauſe to mourn their ſuppreſſion, and many might be eaſed of a load they now feel lying heavily upon them. If this were put in practice, it would agree with the advice of a ſenſible writer of Sweden, who, in the Gazette de France, 1753, thus expreſſed himſelf on that ſubject. "It were ſincerely to be wiſhed," ſays he, "that the cuſtom were eſtabliſhed amongſt "us, that in all events which cauſe a publick joy, "we made our exultations conſpicuous only by acts "uſeful to ſociety. We ſhould then quickly ſee "many uſeful monuments of our reaſon, which "would much better perpetuate the memory of "things worthy of being tranſmitted to poſterity, "and would be much more glorious to humanity than "all theſe tumultuous preparations of feaſts, enter-"tainments, and other rejoicings uſed upon ſuch "occaſions."

The ſame propoſal was long before confirmed by a Chineſe emperor, who lived in the laſt century, who, upon an occaſion of extraordinary joy, forbad his ſubjects to make the uſual illuminations, either with a deſign of ſparing their ſubſtance, or of turning them to ſome more durable indication of joy, more glorious for him, and more advantageous to his people.

After ſuch inſtances of political frugality, can we then continue to blame the Dutch ambaſſador at a certain court, who receiving at his departure the portrait of the king, enriched with diamonds, aſked what this fine thing might be worth? Being told that it might amount to about two thouſand pounds. "And why, cries he, cannot his majeſty keep the "picture, and give the money?" The ſimplicity may be ridiculed at firſt; but, when we come to examine it more cloſely, men of ſenſe will at once confeſs

Digitized by Google

fefs that he had reaſon in what he ſaid, and that a purſe of two thouſand guineas is much more ſerviceable than a picture.

Should we follow the ſame method of ſtate frugality in other reſpects, what numberleſs ſavings might not be the reſult! How many poſſibilities of ſaving in the adminiſtration of juſtice, which now burdens the ſubject, and enriches ſome members of ſociety, who are uſeful only from its corruption!

It were to be wiſhed, that they who govern kingdoms, would imitate artizans. When at London a new ſtuff has been invented, it is immediately counterfeited in France. How happy were it for ſociety, if a firſt miniſter would be equally ſolicitous to tranſplant the uſeful laws of other countries into his own. We are arrived at a perfect imitation of Porcelaine; let us endeavour to imitate the good to ſociety that our neighbours are found to practiſe, and let our neighbours alſo imitate thoſe parts of duty in which we excel.

There are ſome men, who in their garden attempt to raiſe thoſe fruits which Nature has adapted only to the ſultry climates beneath the line. We have at our very doors a thouſand laws and cuſtoms infinitely uſeful; theſe are the fruits we ſhould endeavour to tranſplant; theſe the exotics that would ſpeedily become naturalized to the ſoil. They might grow in every climate, and benefit every poſſeſſor.

The beſt and the moſt uſeful laws I have ever ſeen, are generally practiſed in Holland. When two men are determined to go to law with each other, they are firſt obliged to go before the reconciling judges, called the *peace makers*. If the parties come attended with an advocate or a ſolicitor, they are obliged to retire, as we take fuel from the fire we are deſirous of extinguiſhing.

The peace makers then begin adviſing the parties, by aſſuring them, that it is the height of folly to waſte

Digitized by Google

waſte their ſubſtance, and make themſelves mutually miſerable, by having recourſe to the tribunals of juſtice: follow but our direction, and we will accommodate matters without any expence to either. If the rage of debate is too ſtrong upon either party, they are remitted back for another day, in order that time may ſoften their tempers, and produce a reconciliation. They are thus ſent for twice or thrice; if their folly happens to be incurable, they are permitted to go to law, and as we give up to amputation ſuch members as cannot be cured by art, juſtice is permitted to take its courſe.

It is unneceſſary to make here long declamations, or calculate what ſociety would ſave, were this law adopted. I am ſenſible, that the man who adviſes any reformation, only ſerves to make himſelf ridiculous. What! mankind will be apt to ſay, adopt the cuſtoms of countries that have not ſo much real liberty as our own; our preſent cuſtoms what are they to any man; we are very happy under them; this muſt be a very pleaſant fellow, who attempts to make us happier than we already are! Does he not know that abuſes are the patrimony of a great part of the nation. Why deprive us of a malady by which ſuch numbers find their account. This I muſt own is an argument to which I have nothing to reply.

What numberleſs ſavings might there not be made in both arts and commerce, particularly in the liberty of exerciſing trade, without the neceſſary prerequiſites of freedom! Such uſeleſs obſtructions have crept into every ſtate, from a ſpirit of monopoly, a narrow ſelfiſh ſpirit of gain, without the leaſt attention to general ſociety. Such a clog upon induſtry frequently drives the poor from labour, and reduces them by degrees to a ſtate of hopeleſs indigence. We have already a more than ſufficient repugnance

Digitized by Google

repugnance to labour; we ſhould by no means increaſe the obſtacles, or make excuſes in a ſtate for idleneſs. Such faults have ever crept into a ſtate, under wrong or needy adminiſtrations.

Excluſive of the maſters, there are numberleſs faulty expences among the workmen; clubs, garniſhes, freedoms, and ſuch like impoſitions, which are not too minute even for law to take notice of, and which ſhould be aboliſhed without mercy, ſince they are ever the inlets to exceſs andidleneſs, and are the parent of all thoſe outrages which naturally fall upon the more uſeful part of ſociety. In the towns and countries I have ſeen, I never ſaw a city or village yet, whoſe miſeries were not in proportion to the number of its public houſes. In Rotterdam, you may go through eight or ten ſtreets without finding a public houſe. In Antwerp, almoſt every ſecond houſe ſeems an alehouſe. In the one city all wears the appearance of happineſs and warm affluence; in the other, the young fellows walk about the ſtreets in ſhabby finery, their fathers ſit at the door derning or knitting ſtockings, while their ports are filled with dunghills.

Alehouſes are ever an occaſion of debauchery and exceſs, and either in a religious or political light, it would be our higheſt intereſt to have the greateſt part of them ſuppreſſed. They ſhould be put under laws of not continuing open beyond a certain hour, and harbouring only proper perſons. Theſe rules, it may be ſaid, will diminiſh the neceſſary taxes; but this is falſe reaſoning, ſince what was conſumed in debauchery abroad, would, if ſuch a regulation took place, be more juſtly, and perhaps more equitably for the workmen's family, ſpent at home; and this cheaper to them, and without loſs of time. On the other hand, our alehouſes being ever open interrupt buſineſs; the workman is never certain who frequents

Digitized by Google

frequents them, nor can the maſter be ſure of having what was begun, finiſhed at the convenient time.

An habit of frugality among the lower orders of mankind is much more beneficial to ſociety than the unreflecting might imagine. The pawnbroker, the attorney, and other peſts of ſociety, might by proper management be turned into ſerviceable members; and, were their trades aboliſhed, it is poſſible the ſame avarice that conducts the one, or the ſame chicanery that characterizes the other, might by proper regulations be converted into frugality, and commendable prudence.

But ſome have made the eulogium of luxury, have repreſented it as the natural conſequence of every country that is become rich. Did we not employ our extraordinary wealth in ſuperfluities, ſay they, what other means would there be to employ it in? To which it may be anſwered, if frugality were eſtabliſhed in the ſtate, if our expences were laid out rather in the neceſſaries than the ſuperfluities of life, there might be fewer wants, and even fewer pleaſures, but infinitely more happineſs. The rich and the great would be better able to ſatisfy their creditors; they would be better able to marry their children, and, inſtead of one marriage at preſent, there might be two, if ſuch regulations took place.

The imaginary calls of vanity, which in reality contribute nothing to our real felicity, would not then be attended to, while the real calls of Nature might be always and univerſally ſupplied. The difference of employment in the ſubject is what, in reality, produces the good of ſociety. If the ſubject be engaged in providing only the luxuries, the neceſſaries muſt be deficient in proportion. If neglecting the produce of our own country, our minds are ſet upon the productions of another, we increaſe our wants, but not our means; and every new imported

Digitized by Google

ported delicacy for our tables, or ornament in our equipage, is a tax upon the poor.

The true intereſt of every government is to cultivate the neceſſaries, by which is always meant every happineſs our own country can produce; and ſuppreſs all the luxuries, by which is meant, on the other hand, every happineſs imported from abroad. Commerce has therefore its bounds; and every new import, inſtead of receiving encouragement, ſhould be firſt examined whether it be conducive to the intereſt of ſociety.

Among the many publications with which the preſs is every day burthened, I have often wondered why we never had, as in other countries, an Œconomical Journal, which might at once direct to all the uſeful diſcoveries in other countries, and ſpread thoſe of our own. As other journals ſerve to amuſe the learned, or what is more often the caſe, to make them quarrel, while they only ſerve to give us the hiſtory of the miſchievous world, for ſo I call our warriors; or the idle world, for ſo may the learned be called; they never trouble their heads about the moſt uſeful part of mankind, our peaſants and our artizans; were ſuch a work carried into execution with proper management and juſt direction, it might ſerve as a repoſitory for every uſeful improvement, and increaſe that knowledge which learning often ſerves to confound.

Sweden ſeems the only country where the ſcience of œconomy ſeems to have fixed its empire. In other countries, it is cultivated only by a few admirers, or by ſocieties which have not received ſufficient ſanction to become completely uſeful; but here there is founded a royal academy, deſtined to this purpoſe only, compoſed of the moſt learned and powerful members of the ſtate; an academy which declines every thing which only terminates in amuſement,

Digitized by Google

ment, erudition, or curioſity; and admits only of obſervations tending to illuſtrate huſbandry, agriculture, and every real phyſical improvement. In this country nothing is left to private rapacity, but every improvement is immediately diffuſed, and its inventor immediately recompenſed by the ſtate. Happy were it ſo in other countries; by this means every impoſtor would be prevented from ruining or deceiving the public with pretended diſcoveries or noſtrums, and every real inventor would not, by this means, ſuffer the inconveniences of ſuſpicion.

In ſhort, the œconomy, equally unknown to the prodigal and avaricious, ſeems to be a juſt mean between both extremes; and to a tranſgreſſion of this at preſent decried virtue it is that we are to attribute a great part of the evils which infeſt ſociety. A taſte for ſuperfluity, amuſement, and pleaſure bring effeminacy, idleneſs, and expence in their train. But a thirſt of riches is always proportioned to our debauchery, and the greateſt prodigal is too frequently found to be the greateſt miſer; ſo that the vices which ſeem the moſt oppoſite, are frequently found to produce each other; and, to avoid both, it is only neceſſary to be frugal.

Virtus *eſt medium vitiorum et utrinque reductum.*

HOR.

A REVERIE.

SCARCELY a day paſſes in which we do not hear compliments paid to Dryden, Pope, and other writers of the laſt age, while not a month comes forward that is not loaded with invective againſt the writers

Digitized by Google

writers of this. Strange, that our critics ſhould be fond of giving their favours to thoſe who are inſenſible of the obligation, and their diſlike to thoſe, who of all mankind are moſt apt to retaliate the injury.

Even though our preſent writers had not equal merit with their predeceſſors, it would be politic to uſe them with ceremony. Every compliment paid them would be more agreeable, in proportion as they leaſt deſerved it. Tell a lady with an handſome face that ſhe is pretty, ſhe only thinks it her due; it is what ſhe has heard a thouſand times before from others, and diſregards the compliment: but aſſure a lady, the cut of whoſe viſage is ſomething more plain, that ſhe looks killing to-day, ſhe inſtantly bridles up and feels the force of the well-timed flattery the whole day after. Compliments, which we think are deſerved, we accept only as debts with indifference; but thoſe which conſcience informs us we do not merit, we receive with the ſame gratitude that we do favours given away.

Our gentlemen, however, who preſide at the diſtribution of literary fame, ſeem reſolved to part with praiſe neither from motives of juſtice, or generoſity; one would think, when they take pen in hand, that it was only to blot reputations, and to put their ſeals to the pacquet which conſigns every new-born effort to oblivion.

Yet, notwithſtanding the republic of letters hangs at preſent ſo feebly together; though thoſe friendſhips which once promoted literary fame ſeem now to be diſcontinued; though every writer who now draws the quill ſeems to aim at profit, as well as applauſe, many among them are probably laying in ſtores for immortality, and are provided with a ſufficient ſtock of reputation to laſt the whole journey.

As I was indulging theſe reflections, in order to eke out the preſent page, I could not avoid purſuing

Digitized by Google

ing the metaphor of going a journey in my imagination, and formed the following Reverie too wild for allegory, and too regular for a dream.

I fancied myſelf placed in the yard of a large inn, in which there were an infinite number of waggons and ſtage-coaches, attended by fellows who either invited the company to take their places, or were buſied in packing their baggage. Each vehicle had its inſcription ſhewing the place of its deſtination. On one I could read, *The pleaſure ſtage-coach*; on another, *The waggon of induſtry*; on a third, *The vanity whim*; and on a fourth, *The landau of riches.* I had ſome inclination to ſtep into each of theſe, one after another; but I know not by what means I paſſed them by, and at laſt fixed my eye upon a ſmall carriage Berlin faſhion, which ſeemed the moſt convenient vehicle at a diſtance in the world; and, upon my nearer approach, found it to be *The Fame machine.*

I inſtantly made up to the coachman, whom I found to be an affable and ſeemingly good-natured fellow. He informed me, that he had but a few days ago returned from the temple of fame, to which he had been carrying Addiſon, Swift, Pope, Steele, Congreve, and Colley Cibber. That they made but indifferent company by the way, and that he once or twice was going to empty his berlin of the whole cargo: however, ſays he, I got them all ſafe home, with no other damage than a black eye, which Colley gave Mr. Pope, and am now returned for another coachful. "If that be all, friend," ſaid I, "and if you are in want of company, I'll make one "with all my heart. Open the door; I hope the ma- "chine rides eaſy." "Oh! for that, ſir, extremely "eaſy." But ſtill keeping the door ſhut, and meaſuring me with his eye, "Pray, ſir, have you no "luggage? You ſeem to be a good-natured ſort of "a gentleman; but I don't find you have got any lug-

Digitized by Google

" gage, and I never permit any to travel with me " but ſuch as have ſomething valuable to pay for " coach-hire." Examining my pockets, I own I was not a little diſconcerted at this unexpected rebuff; but conſidering that I carried a number of the BEE under my arm, I was reſolved to open it in his eyes, and dazzle him with the ſplendor of the page. He read the title and contents, however, without any emotion, and aſſured me he had never heard of it before. " In ſhort, friend," ſaid he, now loſing all his former reſpect, " you muſt not come in. I expect " better paſſengers; but, as you ſeem an harmleſs " creature, perhaps if there be room left, I may " let you ride a while for charity."

I now took my ſtand by the coachman at the door, and ſince I could not command a ſeat, was reſolved to be as uſeful as poſſible, and earn by my aſſiduity what I could not by my merit.

The next that preſented for a place was a moſt whimſical figure indeed. He was hung round with papers of his own compoſing, not unlike thoſe who ſing ballads in the ſtreets, and came dancing up to the door with all the confidence of inſtant admittance. The volubility of his motion and addreſs prevented my being able to read more of his cargo than the word Inſpector, which was written in great letters at the top of ſome of the papers. He opened the coach-door himſelf without any ceremony, and was juſt ſlipping in, when the coachman, with as little ceremony, pulled him back. Our figure ſeemed perfectly angry at this repulſe, and demanded gentleman's ſatisfaction. " Lord, ſir!" replied the coachman, " inſtead of proper luggage, by your bulk you ſeem " loaded for a Weſt-India voyage. You are big " enough with all your papers to crack twenty " ſtage-coaches. Excuſe me, indeed, ſir, for you " muſt not enter." Our figure now began to expoſtulate;

Digitized by Google

late; he assured the coachman, that though his baggage seemed so bulky, it was perfectly light, and that he would be contented with the smallest corner of room. But Jehu was inflexible, and the carrier of the Inspectors was sent to dance back again with all his papers fluttering in the wind. We expected to have no more trouble from this quarter, when in a few minutes the same figure changed his appearance, like harlequin upon the stage, and with the same confidence again made his approaches, dressed in lace, and carrying nothing but a nosegay. Upon coming near, he thrust the nosegay to the coachman's nose, grasped the brass, and seemed now resolved to enter by violence. I found the struggle soon begin to grow hot, and the coachman, who was a little old, unable to continue the contest; so, in order to ingratiate myself, I stept in to his assistance, and our united efforts sent our literary Proteus, though worsted, unconquered still, clear off, dancing a rigadoon, and smelling to his own nosegay.

The person, who after him appeared as candidate for a place in the stage, came up with an air not quite so confident, but somewhat however theatrical; and, instead of entering, made the coachman a very low bow, which the other returned, and desired to see his baggage; upon which he instantly produced some farces, a tragedy, and other miscellany productions. The coachman, casting his eye upon the cargoe, assured him, at present he could not possibly have a place, but hoped in time he might aspire to one, as he seemed to have read in the book of Nature, without a careful perusal of which none ever found entrance at the temple of fame. "What!" replied the disappointed poet, "shall my tragedy, "in which I have vindicated the cause of liberty and "virtue!"——"Follow Nature," returned the other, "and never expect to find lasting fame by

Digitized by Google

" topics which only pleaſe from their popularity. " Had you been firſt in the cauſe of freedom, or " praiſed in virtue more than an empty name, it is " poſſible you might have gained admittance; but " at preſent I beg, ſir, you will ſtand aſide for " another gentleman whom I ſee approaching."

This was a very grave perſonage, whom at ſome diſtance I took for one of the moſt reſerved, and even diſagreeable figures I had ſeen; but as he approached his appearance improved, and, when I could diſtinguiſh him thoroughly, I perceived that in ſpite of the ſeverity of his brow he had one of the moſt good-natured countenances that could be imagined. Upon coming to open the ſtage door, he lifted a parcel of folios into the ſeat before him, but our inquiſitorial coachman at once ſhoved them out again. " What! " not take in my dictionary!" exclaimed the other in a rage. " Be patient, ſir," replied the coachman, " I have drove a coach, man and boy, theſe " two thouſand years; but I do not remember to " have carried above one dictionary during the whole " time. That little book which I perceive peeping " from one of your pockets, may I preſume to aſk " what it contains?" " A mere trifle," replied the author, " it is called, " The Rambler." " The " Rambler!" ſays the coachman, " I beg, ſir, you'll " take your place; I have heard our ladies in the " court of Apollo frequently mention it with rap- " ture; and Clio, who happens to be a little grave, " has been heard to prefer it to the Spectator; " though others have obſerved, that the reflections, " by being refined, ſometimes become minute."

This grave gentleman was ſcarcely ſeated, when another, whoſe appearance was ſomething more modern, ſeemed willing to enter, yet afraid to aſk. He carried in his hand a bundle of eſſays, of which the coachman was curious enough to enquire the contents.

Digitized by Google

contents. "These," replied the gentleman, "are "rhapsodies against the religion of my country." "And how can you expect to come into my coach, "after thus chusing the wrong side of the question?" "Ay, but I am right," replied the other; "and if you "give me leave, I shall in a few minutes state the "argument." "Right or wrong," said the coachman, "he who disturbs religion is a blockhead, "and he shall never travel in a coach of mine." "If "then," said the gentleman mustering up all his courage, "if I am not to have admittance as an es-"sayist, I hope I shall not be repulsed as an historian; "the last volume of my history met with applause." "Yes," replied the coachman, "but I have heard "only the first approved at the temple of Fame; "and as I see you have it about you, enter without "further ceremony." My attention was now diverted to a crowd, who were pushing forward a person that seemed more inclined to the *stage-coach of riches*; but by their means he was driven forward to the same machine, which he however seemed heartily to despise. Impelled however by their solicitations, he steps up, flourishing a voluminous history, and demanding admittance. "Sir, I have formerly heard your name mentioned," says the coachman, "but never as an historian. Is there "no other work upon which you may claim a place?" "None," replied the other, "except a romance; but "this is a work of too trifling a nature to claim fu-"ture attention." "You mistake," says the inquisitor, "a well-written romance is no such easy "task as is generally imagined. I remember for-"merly to have carried Cervantes and Segrais, and "if you think fit, you may enter."

Upon our three literary travellers coming into the same coach, I listened attentively to hear what might be the conversation that passed upon this extraordi-

Digitized by Google

nary occaſion; when, inſtead of agreeable or entertaining dialogue, I found them grumbling at each other, and each ſeemed diſcontented with his companions. Strange! thought I to myſelf, that they who are thus born to enlighten the world, ſhould ſtill preſerve the narrow prejudices of childhood, and by diſagreeing make even the higheſt merit ridiculous. Were the learned and the wiſe to unite againſt the dunces of ſociety, inſtead of ſometimes ſiding into oppoſite parties with them, they might throw a luſtre upon each other's reputation, and teach every rank of ſubordinate merit, if not to admire, at leaſt not to avow diſlike.

In the midſt of theſe reflections, I perceived the coachman, unmindful of me, had now mounted the box. Several were approaching to be taken in, whoſe pretenſions I was ſenſible were very juſt; I therefore deſired him to ſtop, and take in more paſſengers; but he replied, as he had now mounted the box, it would be improper to come down; but that he ſhould take them all, one after the other, when he ſhould return. So he drove away, and for myſelf, as I could not get in, I mounted behind, in order to hear the converſation on the way.

(To be continued.)

A WORD OR TWO ON THE LATE FARCE, CALLED HIGH LIFE BELOW STAIRS.

JUST as I had expected, before I ſaw this farce, I found it formed on too narrow a plan to afford a pleaſing variety. The ſameneſs of the humour in every ſcene could not but at laſt fail of being diſagreeable.

Digitized by Google

ble. The poor, affecting the manners of the rich, might be carried on through one character or two at the moſt with great propriety; but to have almoſt every perſonage on the ſcene almoſt of the ſame character, and reflecting the follies of each other, was unartful in the poet to the laſt degree.

The ſcene was alſo almoſt a continuation of the ſame abſurdity; and my Lord Duke and Sir Harry (two footmen who aſſume theſe characters) have nothing elſe to *do* but to talk like their maſters, and are only introduced to ſpeak, and to ſhew themſelves. Thus, as there is a ſameneſs of character, there is a barrenneſs of incident, which, by a very ſmall ſhare of addreſs, the poet might have eaſily avoided.

From a conformity to critic rules, which perhaps on the whole have done more harm than good, our author has ſacrificed all the vivacity of the dialogue to Nature; and though he makes his characters talk like ſervants, they are ſeldom abſurd enough, or lively enough, to make us merry. Though he is always natural, he happens ſeldom to be humorous.

The ſatire was well intended, if we regard it as being maſters ourſelves; but probably a philoſopher would rejoice in that liberty which Engliſhmen give their domeſtics; and for my own part I cannot avoid being pleaſed at the happineſs of thoſe poor creatures, who in ſome meaſure contribute to mine. The Athenians, the politeſt and beſt-natured people upon earth, were the kindeſt to their ſlaves; and if a perſon may judge, who has ſeen the world, our Engliſh ſervants are the beſt treated, becauſe the generality of our Engliſh gentlemen are the politeſt under the ſun.

But not to lift my feeble voice among the pack of critics, who probably have no other occupation but that of cutting up every thing new, I muſt own,

Digitized by Google

there are one or two ſcenes that are fine ſatire, and ſufficiently humorous; particularly the firſt interview between the two footmen, which at once ridicules the manners of the great, and the abſurdity of their imitators.

Whatever defects there might be in the compoſition, there were none in the action; in this the performers ſhewed more humour than I had fancied them capable of. Mr. Palmer and Mr. King were entirely what they deſired to repreſent; and Mrs. Clive (but what need I talk of her, ſince without the leaſt exaggeration ſhe has more true humour than any actor or actreſs upon the Engliſh or any other ſtage I have ſeen); ſhe, I ſay, did the part all the juſtice it was capable of. And upon the whole a farce, which has only this to recommend it, that the author took his plan from the volume of Nature, by the ſprightly manner in which it was performed, was for one night a tolerable entertainment. Thus much may be ſaid in its vindication, that people of faſhion ſeemed more pleaſed in the repreſentation than the ſubordinate ranks of people.

UPON UNFORTUNATE MERIT.

EVERY age ſeems to have its favourite purſuits, which ſerve to amuſe the idle, and relieve the attention of the induſtrious. Happy the man who is born excellent in the purſuit in vogue, and whoſe genius ſeems adapted to the times in which he lives. How many do we ſee, who might have excelled in arts or ſciences, and who ſeem furniſhed with talents equal to the greateſt diſcoveries, had the road not been already beaten by their predeceſſors, and nothing left for

Digitized by Google

for them, except trifles to diſcover, while others of very moderate abilities become famous, becauſe happening to be firſt in the reigning purſuit!

Thus, at the renewal of letters in Europe, the taſte was not to compoſe new books, but to comment on the old ones. It was not to be expected that new books ſhould be written, when there were ſo many of the Antients either not known or not underſtood. It was not reaſonable to attempt new conqueſts, while they had ſuch an extenſive region lying waſte for want of cultivation. At that period criticiſm and erudition were the reigning ſtudies of the times; and he, who had only an inventive genius, might have languiſhed in hopeleſs obſcurity. When the writers of antiquity were ſufficiently explained and known, the learned ſet about imitating them: hence proceeded the number of Latin orators, poets and hiſtorians in the reigns of Clement the ſeventh and Alexander the ſixth. This paſſion for antiquity laſted for many years, to the utter excluſion of every other purſuit, till ſome began to find, that thoſe works which were imitated from Nature, were more like the writings of antiquity, than even thoſe written in expreſs imitation. It was then modern language began to be cultivated with aſſiduity, and our poets and orators poured forth their wonders upon the world.

As writers become more numerous, it is natural for readers to become more indolent; whence muſt neceſſarily ariſe a deſire of attaining knowledge with the greateſt poſſible eaſe. No ſcience or art offers its inſtruction and amuſement in ſo obvious a manner as ſtatuary and painting. Hence we ſee, that a deſire of cultivating thoſe arts generally attends the decline of ſcience. Thus the fineſt ſtatues and the moſt beautiful paintings of antiquity preceded but a little the abſolute decay of every other

Digitized by Google

other ſcience. The ſtatues of Antoninus, Comodus, and their cotemporaries, are the fineſt productions of the chiſſel, and appeared but juſt before learning was deſtroyed by comment, criticiſm, and barbarous invaſions.

What happened in Rome may probably be the caſe with us at home. Our nobility are now more ſolicitous in patronizing painters and ſculptors than thoſe of any other polite profeſſion; and from the lord, who has his gallery, down to the 'prentice, who has his two-pennny copper-plate, all are admirers of this art. The great by their careſſes ſeem inſenſible to all other merit but that of the pencil; and the vulgar buy every book rather from the excellence of the ſculptor than the writer.

How happy were it now, if men of real excellence in that profeſſion were to ariſe! Were the painters of Italy now to appear, who once wandered like beggars from one city to another, and produce their almoſt breathing figures, what rewards might they not expect! But many of them lived without rewards, and therefore rewards alone will never produce their equals. We have often found the great exert themſelves not only without promotion, but in ſpite of oppoſition. We have often found them flouriſhing, like medical plants, in a region of ſavageneſs and barbarity, their excellence unknown, and their virtues unheeded.

They who have ſeen the paintings of Caravagio are ſenſible of the ſurpriſing impreſſion they make; bold, ſwelling, terrible to the laſt degree; all ſeems animated, and ſpeaks him among the foremoſt of his profeſſion; yet this man's fortune and his fame ſeemed ever in oppoſition to each other.

Unknowing how to flatter the great he was driven from city to city in the utmoſt indigence, and might truly be ſaid to paint for his bread.

Having

Digitized by Google

Having one day inſulted a perſon of diſtinction, who refuſed to pay him all the reſpect which he thought his due, he was obliged to leave Rome, and travel on foot, his uſual method of going his journeys down into the country, without either money or friends to ſubſiſt him.

After he had travelled in this manner as long as his ſtrength would permit, faint with famine and fatigue he at laſt called at an obſcure inn by the way ſide. The hoſt knew, by the appearance of his gueſt, his indifferent circumſtances, and refuſed to furniſh him a dinner without previous payment.

As Caravagio was entirely deſtitute of money, he took down the innkeeper's ſign, and painted it anew for his dinner.

Thus refreſhed he proceeded on his journey, and left the innkeeper not quite ſatisfied with this method of payment. Some company of diſtinction however coming ſoon after, and ſtruck with the beauty of the new ſign, bought it at an advanced price, and aſtoniſhed the innkeeper with their generoſity; he was reſolved therefore to get as many ſigns as poſſible drawn by the ſame artiſt, as he found he could ſell them to good advantage; and accordingly ſet out after Caravagio, in order to bring him back. It was night-fall before he came up to the place, where the unfortunate Caravagio lay dead by the road ſide, overcome by fatigue, reſentment, and deſpair.

THE

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, Nº VI.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1759.

On EDUCATION.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE BEE.

SIR,

AS few ſubjects are more intereſting to ſociety, ſo few have been more frequently written upon, than the education of youth. Yet is it not a little ſurprizing, that it ſhould have been treated almoſt by all in a declamatory manner? They have inſiſted largely on the advantages that reſult from it, both to the individual and to ſociety, and have expatiated in the praiſe of what none have ever been ſo hardy as to call in queſtion.

Inſtead of giving us fine but empty harangues upon this ſubject, inſtead of indulging each his particular and whimſical ſyſtems, it had been much better if the writers on this ſubject had treated it in a more ſcientific manner, repreſſed all the ſallies of imagination, and given us the reſult of their obſervations with didactic ſimplicity. Upon this ſubject the ſmalleſt errors are of the moſt dangerous conſequence; and the author ſhould venture the imputation of ſtupidity upon a topic, where his ſlighteſt deviations may tend to injure the riſing generation.

I ſhall therefore throw out a few thoughts upon this ſubject, which have not been attended to by others,

Digitized by Google

others, and ſhall diſmiſs all attempts to pleaſe, while I ſtudy only inſtruction.

The manner in which our youth of London are at preſent educated is, ſome in free ſchools in the city, but the far greater number in boarding ſchools about town. The parent juſtly conſults the health of his child, and finds an education in the country tends to promote this much more than a continuance in town. Thus far they are right; if there were a poſſibility of having even our free ſchools kept a little out of town, it would certainly conduce to the health and vigour of perhaps the mind, as well as of the body. It may be thought whimſical, but it is truth; I have found by experience, that they, who have ſpent all their lives in cities, contract not only an effeminacy of habit, but even of thinking.

But when I have ſaid, that the boarding ſchools are preferable to free ſchools, as being in the country, this is certainly the only advantage I can allow them, otherwiſe it is impoſſible to conceive the ignorance of thoſe who take upon them the important truſt of education. Is any man unfit for any of the profeſſions; he finds his laſt reſource in ſetting up ſchool. Do any become bankrupts in trade; they ſtill ſet up a boarding ſchool, and drive a trade this way, when all others fail: nay, I have been told of butchers and barbers, who have turned ſchool-maſters; and, more ſurpriſing ſtill, made fortunes in their new profeſſion.

Could we think ourſelves in a country of civilized people; could it be conceived that we have any regard for poſterity, when ſuch are permitted to take the charge of the morals, genius and health of thoſe dear little pledges, who may one day be the guardians of the liberties of Europe, and who may ſerve as the honour and bulwark of their aged parents? The care of our children, is it below the ſtate? is it fit

Digitized by Google

fit to indulge the caprice of the ignorant with the diſpoſal of their children in this particular? For the ſtate to take the charge of all its children, as in Perſia or Sparta, might at preſent be inconvenient; but ſurely with great eaſe it might caſt an eye to their inſtructors. Of all members of ſociety, I do not know a more uſeful, or a more honourable one, than a ſchool-maſter; at the ſame time that I do not ſee any more generally deſpiſed, or whoſe talents are ſo ill rewarded.

Were the ſalaries of ſchool-maſters to be augmented from a diminution of uſeleſs ſinecures, how might it turn to the advantage of this people; a people whom without flattery I may in other reſpects term the wiſeſt and greateſt upon earth! But while I would reward the deſerving, I would diſmiſs thoſe utterly unqualified for their employment: In ſhort, I would make the buſineſs of a ſchool-maſter every way more reſpectable, by increaſing their ſalaries, and admitting only men of proper abilities.

There are already ſchool-maſters appointed, and they have ſome ſmall ſalaries; but where at preſent there is but one ſchool-maſter appointed, there ſhould at leaſt be two; and wherever the ſalary is at preſent twenty pounds, it ſhould be an hundred. Do we give immoderate benefices to thoſe who inſtruct ourſelves, and ſhall we deny even ſubſiſtence to thoſe who inſtruct our children. Every member of ſociety ſhould be paid in proportion as he is neceſſary; and I will be bold enough to ſay, that ſchool-maſters in a ſtate are more neceſſary than clergymen, as children ſtand in more need of inſtruction than their parents.

But inſtead of this, as I have already obſerved, we ſend them to board in the country to the moſt ignorant ſet of men that can be imagined. But leſt the

Digitized by Google

the ignorance of the maſter be not ſufficient, the child is generally conſigned to the uſher. This is generally ſome poor needy animal, little ſuperior to a footman either in learning or ſpirit, invited to his place by an advertiſement, and kept there merely from his being of a complying diſpoſition, and making the children fond of him. "You give your "child to be educated to a ſlave," ſays a philoſopher to a rich man; "inſtead of one ſlave, you will "then have two.

It were well however if parents upon fixing their children in one of theſe houſes, would examine the abilities of the uſher as well as of the maſter; for, whatever they are told to the contrary, the uſher is generally the perſon moſt employed in their education. If then a gentleman, upon putting out his ſon to one of theſe houſes, ſees the uſher diſregarded by the maſter, he may depend upon it, that he is equally diſregarded by the boys; the truth is, in ſpite of all their endeavours to pleaſe, they are generally the laughing ſtock of the ſchool. Every trick is played upon the uſher; the oddity of his manners, his dreſs, or his language, is a fund of eternal ridicule; the maſter himſelf now and then cannot avoid joining in the laugh, and the poor wretch, eternally reſenting this ill uſage, ſeems to live in a ſtate of war with all the family. This is a very proper perſon, is it not, to give children a reliſh for learning? They muſt eſteem learning very much, when they ſee its profeſſors uſed with ſuch ceremony. If the uſher be deſpiſed, the father may be aſſured his child will never be properly inſtructed.

But let me ſuppoſe, that there are ſome ſchools without theſe inconveniencies, where the maſter and uſhers are men of learning, reputation, and aſſiduity. If there are to be found ſuch, they cannot be prized in a ſtate ſufficiently. A boy will learn more true wiſdom

Digitized by Google

wiſdom in a public ſchool in a year, than by a private education in five. It is not from maſters, but from their equals, youth learn a knowledge of the world; the little tricks they play each other, the puniſhment that frequently attends the commiſſion, is a juſt picture of the great world, and all the ways of men are practiſed in a public ſchool in miniature. It is true, a child is early made acquainted with ſome vices in a ſchool, but it is better to know theſe when a boy, than be firſt taught them when a man, for their novelty then may have irreſiſtible charms.

In a public education boys early learn temperance; and if the parents and friends would give them leſs money upon their uſual viſits, it would be much to their advantage, ſince it may juſtly be ſaid, that a great part of their diſorders ariſe from ſurfeit, *plus occidit gula quam gladius.* And now I am come to the article of health, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that Mr. Locke and ſome others have adviſed that children ſhould be inured to cold, to fatigue and hardſhip from their youth; but Mr. Locke was but an indifferent phyſician. Habit, I grant, has great influence over our conſtitutions, but we have not preciſe ideas upon this ſubject.

We know that among ſavages and even among our peaſants there are found children born with ſuch conſtitutions, that they croſs rivers by ſwimming, endure cold, thirſt, hunger, and want of ſleep to a ſurprizing degree; that when they happen to fall ſick, they are cured without the help of medicine by nature alone. Such examples are adduced to perſuade us to imitate their manner of education, and accuſtom ourſelves betimes to ſupport the ſame fatigues. But had theſe gentlemen conſidered firſt, that thoſe ſavages and peaſants are generally not ſo long-lived as they who have led a more indolent life: Secondly, that the more laborious the life is,

Digitized by Google

is, the leſs populous is the country. Had they conſidered, that what phyſicians call the *ſtamina vitæ*, by fatigue and labour become rigid, and thus anticipate old age. That the number, who ſurvive thoſe rude trials, bears no proportion to thoſe who die in the experiment. Had theſe things been properly conſidered, they would not have thus extolled an education begun in fatigue and hardſhips. Peter the Great, willing to enure the children of his ſeamen to a life of hardſhip, ordered that they ſhould drink only ſea water, but they unfortunately all died under the experiment.

But while I would exclude all unneceſſary labours, yet ſtill I would recommend temperance in the higheſt degree. No luxurious diſhes with high-ſeaſoning, nothing given children to force an appetite, as little ſugared or ſalted proviſions as poſſible, though never ſo pleaſing; but milk, morning and night, ſhould be their conſtant food. This diet would make them more healthy than any of thoſe ſlops that are uſually cooked by the miſtreſs of a boarding ſchool; beſides, it corrects any conſumptive habits, not unfrequently found amongſt the children of city parents.

As boys ſhould be educated with temperance, ſo the firſt greateſt leſſon that ſhould be taught them is, to admire frugality. It is by the exerciſe of this virtue alone, they can ever expect to be uſeful members of ſociety. It is true, lectures continually repeated upon this ſubject may make ſome boys when they grow up, run into an extreme, and become miſers; but it were well, had we more miſers than we have among us. I know few characters more uſeful in ſociety, for a man's having a larger or ſmaller ſhare of money lying uſeleſs by him, no way injures the common wealth; ſince, ſhould every miſer now exhauſt his ſtores, this might make gold

Digitized by Google

more plenty, but it would not increaſe the commodities or pleaſures of life; they would ſtill remain as they are at preſent; it matters not therefore, whether men are miſers or not, if they be only frugal, laborious, and fill the ſtation they have choſen. If they deny themſelves the neceſſaries of life, ſociety is no way injured by their folly.

Inſtead therefore of romances, which praiſe young men of ſpirit, who go through a variety of adventures, and at laſt conclude a life of diſſipation, folly, and extravagance in riches and matrimony, there ſhould be ſome men of wit employed to compoſe books that might equally intereſt the paſſions of our youth, where ſuch an one might be praiſed for having reſiſted allurements when young, and how he at laſt became lord mayor; how he was married to a lady of great ſenſe, fortune, and beauty: to be as explicit as poſſible, the old ſtory of Whittington, were his cat left out, might be more ſerviceable to the tender mind, than either Tom Jones, Joſeph Andrews, or an hundred others, where frugality is the only good quality the hero is not poſſeſſed of. Were our ſchool-maſters, if any of them had ſenſe enough to draw up ſuch a work, thus employed, it would be much more ſerviceable to their pupils, than all the grammars and dictionaries they may publiſh theſe ten years.

Children ſhould early be inſtructed in the arts from which they would afterwards draw the greateſt advantages. When the wonders of nature are never expoſed to our view, we have no great deſire to become acquainted with thoſe parts of learning which pretend to account for the phænomena. One of the ancients complains, that as ſoon as young men have left ſchool, and are obliged to converſe in the world, they fancy themſelves tranſported into a new region. *Ut cum in forum venerint exiſtiment ſe in aliam terrarum orbem*

Digitized by Google

orbem delatos. We ſhould early therefore inſtruct them in the experiments, if I may ſo expreſs it, of knowledge, and leave to maturer age the accounting for the cauſes. But inſtead of that, when boys begin natural philoſophy in colleges, they have not the leaſt curioſity for thoſe parts of the ſcience which are propoſed for their inſtruction; they have never before ſeen the phænomena, and conſequently have no curioſity to learn the reaſons. Might natural philoſophy therefore be made their paſtime in ſchool, by this means it would in college become their amuſement.

In ſeveral of the machines now in uſe there would be ample field both for inſtruction and amuſement; the different ſorts of the phoſphorus, the artificial pyrites, magnetiſm, electricity, the experiments upon the rarefaction and weight of the air, and thoſe upon elaſtic bodies, might employ their idle hours, and none ſhould be called from play to ſee ſuch experiments but ſuch as thought proper. At firſt then it would be ſufficient if the inſtruments, and the effects of their combination were only ſhewn; the cauſes ſhould be deferred to a maturer age, or to thoſe times when natural curioſity prompts us to diſcover the wonders of nature. Man is placed in this world as a ſpectator; when he is tired with wondering at all the novelties about him, and not till then, does he deſire to be made acquainted with the cauſes that create thoſe wonders.

What I have obſerved with regard to natural philoſophy, I would extend to every other ſcience whatſoever. We ſhould teach them as many of the facts as were poſſible, and defer the cauſes until they ſeemed of themſelves deſirous of knowing them. A mind thus leaving ſchool ſtored with all the ſimple experiences of ſcience, would be the fitteſt in the world for the college courſe; and though ſuch

Digitized by Google

a youth might not appear ſo bright, or ſo talkative, as thoſe who had learned the real principles and cauſes of ſome of the ſciences, yet he would make a wiſer man, and would retain a more laſting paſſion for letters, than he who was early burdened with the diſagreeable inſtitution of effect and cauſe.

In hiſtory, ſuch ſtories alone ſhould be laid before them as might catch the imagination; inſtead of this, they are too frequently obliged to toil through the four empires, as they are called, where their memories are burdened by a number of diſguſting names, that deſtroy all their future reliſh for our beſt hiſtorians, who may be termed the trueſt teachers of wiſdom.

Every ſpecies of flattery ſhould be carefully avoided; a boy, who happens to ſay a ſprightly thing, is generally applauded ſo much, that he happens to continue a coxcomb ſometimes all his life after. He is reputed a wit at fourteen, and becomes a blockhead at twenty. Nurſes, footmen and ſuch, ſhould therefore be driven away as much as poſſible. I was even going to add, that the mother herſelf ſhould ſtifle her pleaſure, or her vanity, when little maſter happens to ſay a good or a ſmart thing. Thoſe modeſt lubberly boys, who ſeem to want ſpirit, generally go through their buſineſs with more eaſe to themſelves, and more ſatisfaction to their inſtructors.

There has of late a gentleman appeared, who thinks the ſtudy of rhetoric eſſential to a perfect education. That bold male eloquence, which often without pleaſing convinces, is generally deſtroyed by ſuch inſtitutions. Convincing eloquence, however, is infinitely more ſerviceable to its poſſeſſor than the moſt florid harangue or the moſt pathetic tones that can be imagined; and the man who is thoroughly convinced himſelf, who underſtands his ſubject, and the language he ſpeaks in, will be more

Digitized by Google

apt to ſilence oppoſition, than he who ſtudies the force of his periods, and fills our ears with ſounds, while our minds are deſtitute of conviction.

It was reckoned the fault of the orators at the decline of the Roman empire, when they had been long inſtructed by rhetoricians, that their periods were ſo harmonious, as that they could be ſung as well as ſpoken. What a ridiculous figure muſt one of theſe gentlemen cut thus meaſuring ſyllables, and weighing words, when he ſhould plead the cauſe of his client! Two architects were once candidates for the building a certain temple at Athens; the firſt harangued the crowd very learnedly upon the different orders of architecture, and ſhewed them in what manner the temple ſhould be built; the other who got up to ſpeak after him, only obſerved, that what his brother had ſpoken he could do; and thus he at once gained his cauſe.

To teach men to be orators is little leſs than to teach them to be poets; and for my part, I ſhould have too great a regard for my child, to wiſh him a manor only in a bookſeller's ſhop.

Another paſſion which the preſent age is apt to run into, is to make children learn all things; the languages, the ſciences, muſic, the exerciſes, and painting. Thus the child ſoon becomes a *talker* in all, but a *maſter* in none. He thus acquires a ſuperficial fondneſs for every thing, and only ſhews his ignorance when he attempts to exhibit his ſkill.

As I deliver my thoughts without method or connection, ſo the reader muſt not be ſurprized to find me once more addreſſing ſchoolmaſters on the preſent method of teaching the learned languages, which is commonly by literal tranſlations. I would aſk ſuch if they were to travel a journey, whether thoſe parts of the road in which they found the greateſt difficulties would not be moſt ſtrongly remembered?

Digitized by Google

Boys who, if I may continue the allusion, gallop through one of the ancients with the assistance of a translation, can have but a very slight acquaintance either with the author or his language. It is by the exercise of the mind alone that a language is learned; but a literal translation on the opposite page leaves no exercise for the memory at all. The boy will not be at the fatigue of remembering, when his doubts are at once satisfied by a glance of the eye; whereas were every word to be sought from a dictionary, the learner would attempt to remember in order to save him the trouble of looking out for it for the future.

To continue in the same pedantic strain, though no school-master, of all the various grammars now taught in the schools about town, I would recommend only the old common one; I have forgot whether Lily's, or an emendation of him. The others may be improvements; but such improvements seem to me only mere grammatical niceties, no way influencing the learner, but perhaps loading him with trifling subtilties, which at a proper age he must be at some pains to forget.

Whatever pains a master may take to make the learning of the languages agreeable to his pupil, he may depend upon it, it will be at first extremely unpleasant. The rudiments of every language, therefore, must be given as a task, not as an amusement. Attempting to deceive children into instruction of this kind, is only deceiving ourselves; and I know no passion capable of conquering a child's natural laziness but fear. Solomon has said it before me; nor is there any more certain, though perhaps more disagreeable truth, than the proverb in verse, too well known to repeat on the present occasion. It is very probable that parents are told of some masters who never use the rod, and consequently are thought the properest instructors for their children; but though

Digitized by Google

though tenderneſs is a requiſite quality in an inſtructor, yet there is too often the trueſt tenderneſs in well-timed correction.

Some have juſtly obſerved, that all paſſion ſhould be baniſhed on this terrible occaſion; but I know not how; there is a frailty attending human nature, that few maſters are able to keep their temper whilſt they correct. I knew a good-natured man, who was ſenſible of his own weakneſs in this reſpect, and conſequently had recourſe to the following expedient to prevent his paſſions from being engaged, yet at the ſame time adminiſter juſtice with impartiality. Whenever any of his pupils committed a fault, he ſummoned a jury of his peers, I mean of the boys of his own or the next claſſes to him; his accuſers ſtood forth; he had a liberty of pleading in his own defence, and one or two more had a liberty of pleading againſt him: when found guilty by the pannel, he was conſigned to the footman, who attended in the houſe, who had previous orders to puniſh, but with lenity. By this means the maſter took off the odium of puniſhment from himſelf; and the footman, between whom and the boys there could not be even the ſlighteſt intimacy, was placed in ſuch a light as to be ſhunned by every boy in the ſchool *.

And now I have gone thus far, perhaps you will think me ſome pedagogue, willing by a well-timed puff, to increaſe the reputation of his own ſchool; but ſuch is not the caſe. The regard I have for ſociety, for thoſe tender minds who are the objects

* This diſſertation was thus far introduced into the volume of eſſays, afterwards publiſhed by Dr. Goldſmith, with the following obſervation:

This treatiſe was publiſhed before Rouſſeau's Emilius: if there be a ſimilitude in any one inſtance, it is hoped the author of the preſent eſſay will not be termed a plagiariſt.

Digitized by Google

of the preſent eſſay, is the only motive I have for offering thoſe thoughts, calculated not to ſurprize by their novelty, or the elegance of compoſition, but merely to remedy ſome defects which have crept into the preſent ſyſtem of ſchool education. If this letter ſhould be inſerted, perhaps I may trouble you in my next with ſome thoughts upon an univerſity education, not with an intent to exhauſt the ſubject, but to amend ſome few abuſes. I am, &c.

ON THE INSTABILITY OF WORLDLY GRANDEUR.

AN alehouſe-keeper near Iſlington, who had long lived at the ſign of the French king, upon the commencement of the laſt war with France, pulled down his old ſign, and put up the queen of Hungary. Under the influence of her red face and golden ſceptre, he continued to ſell ale till ſhe was no longer the favourite of his cuſtomers; he changed her therefore ſome time ago for the king of Pruſſia, who may probably be changed in turn for the next great man that ſhall be ſet up for vulgar admiration.

Our publican in this imitates the great exactly, who deal out their figures one after the other to the gazing crowd beneath them. When we have ſufficiently wondered at one, that is taken in, and another exhibited in its room, which ſeldom holds its ſtation long; for the mob are ever pleaſed with variety.

I muſt own I have ſuch an indifferent opinion of the vulgar, that I am ever led to ſuſpect that merit which raiſes their ſhout; at leaſt I am certain to find thoſe

Digitized by Google

thoſe great and ſometimes good men, who find ſatisfaction in ſuch acclamations, made worſe by it; and Hiſtory has too frequently taught me, that the head which has grown this day giddy with the roar of the million, has the very next been fixed upon a pole.

As Alexander VI. was entering a little town in the neighbourhood of Rome, which had been juſt evacuated by the enemy, he perceived the townſmen buſy in the market-place in pulling down from a gibbet a figure, which had been deſigned to repreſent himſelf. There were alſo ſome knocking down a neighbouring ſtatue of one of the Orſini family, with whom he was at war, in order to put Alexander's effigy when taken down, in its place. It is poſſible a man who knew leſs of the world would have condemned the adulation of thoſe barefaced flatterers; but Alexander ſeemed pleaſed at their zeal, and turning to Borgia his ſon, ſaid with a ſmile, *Vides, mi fili, quam leve diſcrimen palibulum inter et ſtatuum.* "You ſee, my ſon, the ſmall difference "between a gibbet and a ſtatue." If the great could be taught any leſſon, this might ſerve to teach them upon how weak a foundation their glory ſtands, which is built upon popular applauſe; for as ſuch praiſe what ſeems like merit, they as quickly condemn what has only the appearance of guilt.

Popular glory is a perfect coquet; her lovers muſt toil, feel every inquietude, indulge every caprice, and perhaps at laſt be jilted into the bargain. True glory on the other hand reſembles a woman of ſenſe; her admirers muſt play no tricks; they feel no great anxiety, for they are ſure in the end of being rewarded in proportion to their merit. When Swift uſed to appear in public, he generally had the mob ſhouting in his train. "Pox take theſe fools," he

Digitized by Google

he would ſay, "how much joy might all this bawling give my Lord Mayor!"

We have ſeen thoſe virtues, which have while living retired from the public eye, generally tranſmitted to poſterity, as the trueſt objects of admiration and praiſe. Perhaps the character of the late Duke of Marlborough may one day be ſet up, even above that of his more talked-of predeceſſor; ſince an aſſemblage of all the mild and amiable virtues is far ſuperior to thoſe vulgarly called the great ones. I muſt be pardoned for this ſhort tribute to the memory of a man, who while living would as much deteſt to receive any thing that wore the appearance of flattery, as I ſhould to offer it.

I know not how to turn ſo trite a ſubject out of the beaten road of common place, except by illuſtrating it, rather by the aſſiſtance of my memory than my judgment, and inſtead of making reflections by telling a ſtory.

A Chineſe, who had long ſtudied the works of Confucius, who knew the characters of fourteen thouſand words, and could read a great part of every book that came in his way, once took it into his head to travel into Europe, and obſerve the cuſtoms of a people whom he thought not very much inferior even to his own countrymen, in the arts of refining upon every pleaſure. Upon his arrival at Amſterdam his paſſion for letters naturally led him to a bookſeller's ſhop; and as he could ſpeak a little Dutch, he civilly aſked the bookſeller for the works of the immortal Ilixofou. The bookſeller aſſured him, he had never heard the book mentioned before. "What, have you never heard of that immor-
"tal poet," returned the other much ſurpriſed,
"that light of the eyes, that favourite of kings,
"that roſe of perfection! I ſuppoſe you know no-
"thing of the immortal Fipſihihi, ſecond couſin to
"the

Digitized by Google

"the moon?" "Nothing at all, indeed ſir," returned the other. "Alas!" cries our traveller, "to what purpoſe then has one of theſe faſted to "death, and the other offered himſelf up as a ſacri- "fice to the Tartarean enemy, to gain a renown "which has never travelled beyond the precincts "of China!"

There is ſcarcely a village in Europe, and not one univerſity, that is not thus furniſhed with its little great men. The head of a petty corporation, who oppoſes the deſigns of a prince, who would tyrannically force his ſubjects to ſave their beſt cloaths for ſundays; the puny pedant who finds one undiſcovered property in the polype, deſcribes an unheeded proceſs in the ſkeleton of a mole, and whoſe mind like his microſcope perceives nature only in detail; the rhymer who makes ſmooth verſes, and paints to our imagination when he ſhould only ſpeak to our hearts; all equally fancy themſelves walking forward to immortality, and deſire the crowd behind them to look on. The crowd takes them at their word. Patriot, philoſopher, and poet, are ſhouted in their train. Where was there ever ſo much merit ſeen; no times ſo important as our own; ages yet unborn ſhall gaze with wonder and applauſe! to ſuch muſic the important pigmy moves forward, buſtling and ſwelling, and aptly compared to a *puddle in a ſtorm.*

I have lived to ſee generals, who once had crowds halloing after them wherever they went, who were bepraiſed by newſpapers and magazines, thoſe echoes of the voice of the vulgar, and yet they have long ſunk into merited obſcurity, with ſcarcely even an epitaph left to flatter. A few years ago the herring fiſhery employed all Grub-ſtreet; it was the topic in every coffee-houſe, and the burthen of every ballad. We were to drag up oceans of gold from

Digitized by Google

from the bottom of the ſea; we were to ſupply all Europe with herrings upon our own terms. At preſent we hear no more of all this. We have fiſhed up very little gold that I can learn; nor do we furniſh the world with herrings, as was expected. *Let us wait but a few years longer, and we ſhall find all our expectations an herring fiſhery.*

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE ACADEMIES OF ITALY.

THERE is not perhaps a country in Europe, in which learning is ſo faſt upon the decline as in Italy; yet not one in which there are ſuch a number of academies inſtituted for its ſupport. There is ſcarcely a conſiderable town in the whole country, which has not one or two inſtitutions of this nature, where the learned, as they are pleaſed to call themſelves, meet to harangue, to compliment each other, and praiſe the utility of their inſtitution.

Jarchius has taken the trouble to give us a liſt of thoſe clubs, or academies, which amount to five hundred and fifty, each diſtinguiſhed by ſomewhat whimſical in the name. The academies of Bologna, for inſtance, are divided into the Abbandonati, the Auſioſi, Ocioſio, Arcadi, Confuſi, Dubbioſi, &c. There are few of theſe who have not publiſhed their tranſactions, and ſcarcely a member who is not looked upon as the moſt famous man in the world, at home.

Of all thoſe ſocieties I know of none, whoſe works are worth being known out of the precincts of the city in which they were written, except the Cicalata

Digitized by Google

Cicalata Academica (or, as we might expreſs it, the tickling ſociety) of Florence. I have juſt now before me a manuſcript oration, ſpoken by the late Tomaſo Crudeli at that ſociety, which will at once ſerve to give a better picture of the manner in which men of wit amuſe themſelves in that country, than any thing I could ſay upon the occaſion. The oration is this:

"The younger the nymph, my dear companions, the more happy the lover. From fourteen to ſeventeen, you are ſure of finding love for love; from ſeventeen to twenty-one, there is always a mixture of intereſt and affection. But when that period is paſt, no longer expect to receive, but to buy. No longer expect a nymph who gives, but who ſells her favours. At this age every glance is taught its duty; not a look, not a ſigh, without deſign; the lady, like a ſkilful warrior, aims at the heart of another, while ſhe ſhields her own from danger.

"On the contrary at fifteen you may expect nothing but ſimplicity, innocence, and nature. The paſſions are then ſincere; the ſoul ſeems ſeated in the lips; the dear object feels preſent happineſs, without being anxious for the future; her eyes brighten if her lover approaches; her ſmiles are borrowed from the Graces, and her very miſtakes ſeem to complete her deſires.

"Lucretia was juſt ſixteen. The roſe and lily took poſſeſſion of her face, and her boſom, by its hue and its coldneſs, ſeemed covered with ſnow. So much beauty, and ſo much virtue ſeldom want admirers. Orlandino, a youth of ſenſe and merit, was among the number. He had long languiſhed for an opportunity of declaring his paſſion, when Cupid, as if willing to indulge his happineſs, brought the charming young couple by mere accident to an arbour, where every prying eye but love was abſent. Orlandino talked of the ſincerity of his paſſion,

Digitized by Google

ſion, and mixed flattery with his addreſſes; but it was all in vain. The Nymph was pre-engaged, and had long devoted to heaven thoſe charms for which he ſued. "My dear Orlandino," ſaid ſhe, "you "know I have long been dedicated to St. Catharine, "and to her belongs all that lies below my girdle; "all that is above, you may freely poſſeſs, but far- "ther I cannot, muſt not, comply. The vow is "paſſed; I wiſh it were undone, but now it is "impoſſible." You may conceive, my companions, the embarraſſment our young lovers felt upon this occaſion. They kneeled to St. Catharine, and though both deſpaired, both implored her aſſiſtance. Their tutelar ſaint was entreated to ſhew ſome expedient, by which both might continue to love, and yet both be happy. Their petition was ſincere. St. Catharine was touched with compaſſion; for lo, a miracle! Lucreria's girdle unlooſed, as if without hands; and though before bound round her middle, fell ſpontaneouſly down to her feet, and gave Orlandino the poſſeſſion of all thoſe beauties which lay above it."

THE

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, No VII.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1759.

OF ELOQUENCE.

OF all kinds of ſucceſs, that of an orator is the moſt pleaſing. Upon other occaſions the applauſe we deſerve is conferred in our abſence, and we are inſenſible of the pleaſure we have given; but in eloquence the victory and the triumph are inſeparable. We read our own glory in the face of every ſpectator, the audience is moved, the antagoniſt is defeated, and the whole circle burſts into unſolicited applauſe.

The rewards which attend excellence in this way are ſo pleaſing, that numbers have written profeſſed treatiſes to teach us the art; ſchools have been eſtabliſhed with no other intent; rhetoric has taken place among the inſtitutions, and pedants have ranged under proper heads, and diſtinguiſhed with long learned names, *ſome* of the ſtrokes of Nature, or of paſſion, which orators have uſed. I ſay only *ſome*; for a folio volume could not contain all the figures, which have been uſed by the truly eloquent, and ſcarcely a good ſpeaker or writer, but makes uſe of ſome that are peculiar or new.

Eloquence has preceded the rules of rhetoric, as languages have been formed before grammar. Nature renders men eloquent in great intereſts, or great paſſions. He that is ſenſibly touched, ſees things

Digitized by Google

things with a very different eye from the reſt of mankind. All Nature to him becomes an object of compariſon and metaphor, without attending to it; he throws life into all, and inſpires his audience with a part of his own enthuſiaſm.

It has been remarked, that the lower parts of mankind generally expreſs themſelves moſt figuratively, and that tropes are found in the moſt ordinary forms of converſation. Thus in every language the heart burns; the courage is rouzed; the eyes ſparkle; the ſpirits are caſt down; paſſion enflames; pride ſwells, and pity ſinks the ſoul. Nature every where ſpeaks in thoſe ſtrong images, which from their frequency paſs unnoticed.

Nature it is which inſpires thoſe rapturous enthuſiaſms, thoſe irreſiſtible turns; a ſtrong paſſion, a preſſing danger, calls up all the imagination, and gives the orator irreſiſtible force. Thus a captain of the firſt caliphs ſeeing his ſoldiers fly, cried out, "Whither do you run? the enemy are not "there! You have been told that the caliph is dead; "but God is ſtill living. He regards the brave, and "will reward the courageous. Advance!"

A man therefore may be called eloquent, who tranſfers the paſſion or ſentiment with which he is moved himſelf, into the breaſt of another; and this definition appears the more juſt, as it comprehends the graces of ſilence, and of action. An intimate perſuaſion of the truth to be proved, is the ſentiment and paſſion to be tranſferred; and who effects this, is truly poſſeſſed of the talent of eloquence.

I have called eloquence a talent, and not an art, as ſo many rhetoricians have done, as art is acquired by exerciſe and ſtudy, and eloquence is the gift of Nature. Rules will never make either a work or a diſcourſe eloquent; they only ſerve to prevent faults, but not to introduce beauties; to prevent thoſe paſſages

Digitized by Google

ſages, which are truly eloquent and dictated by Nature from being blended with others, which might diſguſt, or at leaſt abate our paſſion.

What we clearly conceive, ſays Boileau, we can clearly expreſs. I may add, that what is felt with emotion is expreſſed alſo with the ſame movements; the words ariſe as readily to paint our emotions, as to expreſs our thoughts with perſpicuity. The cool care an orator takes to expreſs paſſions which he does not feel, only prevents his riſing into that paſſion he would ſeem to feel. In a word, to feel your ſubject thoroughly, and to ſpeak without fear, are the only rules of eloquence, properly ſo called, which I can offer. Examine a writer of genius on the moſt beautiful parts of his work, and he will always aſſure you that ſuch paſſages are generally thoſe which have given him the leaſt trouble, for they came as if by inſpiration. To pretend that cold and didactic precepts will make a man eloquent, is only to prove that he is incapable of eloquence.

But, as in being perſpicuous it is neceſſary to have a full idea of the ſubject, ſo in being eloquent it is not ſufficient, if I may ſo expreſs it, to feel by halves. The orator ſhould be ſtrongly impreſſed, which is generally the effect of a fine and exquiſite ſenſibility, and not that tranſient and ſuperficial emotion, which he excites in the greateſt part of his audience. It is even impoſſible to affect the hearers in any great degree without being affected ourſelves. In vain it will be objected, that many writers have had the art to inſpire their readers with a paſſion for virtue, without being virtuous themſelves; ſince it may be anſwered, that ſentiments of virtue filled their minds at the time they were writing. They felt the inſpiration ſtrongly, while they praiſed juſtice, generoſity, or good-nature; but unhappily for them, theſe paſſions might have been

Digitized by Google

diſcontinued, when they laid down the pen. In vain will it be objected again, that we can move without being moved, as we can convince without being convinced. It is much eaſier to deceive our reaſon than ourſelves; a trifling defect in reaſoning may be overſeen, and lead a man aſtray; for it requires reaſon and time to detect the falſhood, but our paſſions are not eaſily impoſed upon, our eyes, our ears, and every ſenſe, are watchful to detect the impoſture.

No diſcourſe can be eloquent, that does not elevate the mind. Pathetic eloquence, it is true, has for its only object to affect; but I appeal to men of ſenſibility, whether their pathetic feelings are not accompanied with ſome degree of elevation. We may then call eloquence and ſublimity the ſame thing, ſince it is impoſſible to be one without feeling the other. Hence it follows, that we may be eloquent in any language, ſince no language refuſes to paint thoſe ſentiments, with which we are thoroughly impreſſed. What is uſually called ſublimity of ſtyle ſeems to be only an error. Eloquence is not in the words but in the ſubject, and in great concerns the more ſimply any thing is expreſſed, it is generally the more ſublime. True eloquence does not conſiſt, as the rhetoricians aſſure us, in ſaying great things in a ſublime ſtyle, but in a ſimple ſtyle; for there is, properly ſpeaking, no ſuch thing as a ſublime ſtyle, the ſublimity lies only in the things; and when they are not ſo, the language may be turgid, affected, metaphorical, but not affecting.

What can be more ſimply expreſſed than the following extract from a celebrated preacher, and yet what was ever more ſublime? Speaking of the ſmall number of the elect, he breaks out thus among his audience: "Let me ſuppoſe that this was the "laſt

Digitized by Google

"last hour of us all; that the heavens were open-
"ing over our heads; that time was passed, and
"eternity begun; that Jesus Christ in all his glory,
"that man of sorrows in all his glory, appeared on
"the tribunal, and that we were assembled here
"to receive our final decree of life or death eter-
"nal! Let me ask, impressed with terror like
"you, and not separating my lot from yours,
"but putting myself in the same situation in which
"we must all one day appear before God, our
"judge: let me ask, if Jesus Christ should now ap-
"pear to make the terrible separation of the just
"from the unjust, do you think the greatest num-
"ber would be saved? Do you think the number
"of the elect would even be equal to that of the sin-
"ners? Do you think, if all our works were exa-
"mined with justice, would he find ten just per-
"sons in this great assembly? Monsters of ingrati-
"tude! would he find one?" Such passages as these are sublime in every language. The expression may be less speaking, or more indistinct, but the greatness of the idea still remains. In a word, we may be eloquent in every language and in every style, since elocution is only an assistant, but not a constitutor of eloquence.

Of what use then, will it be said, are all the precepts given us upon this head both by the antients and moderns? I answer, that they cannot make us eloquent, but they will certainly prevent us from becoming ridiculous. They can seldom procure a single beauty, but they may banish a thousand faults. The true method of an orator is not to attempt always to move, always to affect, to be continually sublime, but at proper intervals to give rest both to his own and the passions of his audience. In these periods of relaxation, or of preparation rather, rules may teach him to avoid any thing low, trivial, or disgusting. Thus criticism, properly speaking, is

Digitized by Google

intended not to aſſiſt thoſe parts which are ſublime, but thoſe which are naturally mean and humble, which are compoſed with coolneſs and caution, and where the orator rather endeavours not to offend, than attempts to pleaſe.

I have hitherto inſiſted more ſtrenuouſly on that eloquence which ſpeaks to the paſſions, as it is a ſpecies of oratory almoſt unknown in England. At the bar it is quite diſcontinued, and I think with juſtice. In the ſenate it is uſed but ſparingly, as the orator ſpeaks to enlightened judges. But in the pulpit, in which the orator ſhould chiefly addreſs the vulgar, it ſeems ſtrange that it ſhould be entirely laid aſide.

The vulgar of England are, without exception, the moſt barbarous and the moſt unknowing of any in Europe. A great part of their ignorance may be chiefly aſcribed to their teachers, who with the moſt pretty gentleman-like ſerenity deliver their cool diſcourſes, and addreſs the reaſon of men, who have never reaſoned in all their lives. They are told of cauſe and effect, of beings ſelf exiſtent, and the univerſal ſcale of beings. They are informed of the excellence of the Bangorian controverſy, and the abſurdity of an intermediate ſtate. The ſpruce preacher reads his lucubration without lifting his noſe from the text, and never ventures to earn the ſhame of an enthuſiaſt.

By this means, though his audience feel not one word of all he ſays, he earns however among his acquaintance the character of a man of ſenſe; among his acquaintance only did I ſay, nay even with his biſhop.

The polite of every country have ſeveral motives to induce them to a rectitude of action; the love of virtue for its own ſake, the ſhame of offending, and the deſire of pleaſing. The vulgar have but one, the enforcements of religion; and yet thoſe, who ſhould

Digitized by Google

ſhould puſh this motive home to their hearts, are baſely found to deſert their poſt. They ſpeak to the ſquire, the philoſopher, and the pedant; but the poor, thoſe who really want inſtruction, are left uninſtructed.

I have attended moſt of our pulpit orators, who, it muſt be owned, write extremely well upon the text they aſſume. To give them their due alſo, they read their ſermons with elegance and propriety, but this goes but a very ſhort way in true eloquence. The ſpeaker muſt be moved. In this, in this alone, our Engliſh divines are deficient. Were they to ſpeak to a few calm diſpaſſionate hearers, they certainly uſe the propereſt methods of addreſs; but their audience is chiefly compoſed of the poor, who muſt be influenced by motives of reward and puniſhment, and whoſe only virtues lie in ſelf-intereſt or fear.

How then are ſuch to be addreſſed? not by ſtudied periods or cold diſquiſitions; not by the labours of the head, but the honeſt ſpontaneous dictates of the heart. Neither writing a ſermon with regular periods and all the harmony of elegant expreſſion; neither reading it with emphaſis, propriety, and deliberation; neither pleaſing with metaphor, ſimile, or rhetorical fuſtian; neither arguing coolly, and untying conſequences united in *a priori*, nor bundling up inductions *a poſteriori*; neither pedantic jargon, nor academical trifling, can perſuade the poor; writing a diſcourſe coolly in the cloſet, then getting it by memory, and delivering it on Sundays, even that will not do. What then is to be done? I know of no expedient to ſpeak; to ſpeak at once intelligibly, and feelingly, except to underſtand the language. To be convinced of the truth of the object, to be perfectly acquainted with the ſubject in view, to prepoſſeſs yourſelf with a low

Digitized by Google

opinion of your audience, and to do the reſt extempore: by this means ſtrong expreſſions, new thoughts, riſing paſſions, and the true declamatory ſtyle, will naturally enſue.

Fine declamation does not conſiſt in flowery periods, delicate alluſions, or muſical cadences; but in a plain, open, looſe ſtyle, where the periods are long and obvious; where the ſame thought is often exhibited in ſeveral points of view; all this ſtrong ſenſe, a good memory, and a ſmall ſhare of experience, will furniſh to every orator; and without theſe a clergyman may be called a fine preacher, a judicious preacher, and a man of good ſenſe; he may make his hearers admire his underſtanding, but will ſeldom enlighten theirs.

When I think of the Methodiſt preachers among us, how ſeldom they are endued with common ſenſe, and yet how often and how juſtly they affect their hearers, I cannot avoid ſaying within myſelf, had theſe been bred gentlemen, and been endued with even the meaneſt ſhare of underſtanding, what might they not effect! Did our biſhops, who can add dignity to their expoſtulations, teſtify the ſame fervour, and *intreat* their hearers, as well as *argue*, what might not be the conſequence! The vulgar, by which I mean the bulk of mankind, would then have a double motive to love religion, firſt from ſeeing its profeſſors honoured here, and next from the conſequences hereafter. At preſent the enthuſiaſms of the poor are oppoſed to law; did law conſpire with their enthuſiaſms, we ſhould not only be the happieſt nation upon earth, but the wiſeſt alſo.

Enthuſiaſm in religion, which prevails only among the vulgar, ſhould be the chief object of politics. A ſociety of enthuſiaſts, governed by reaſon among the great, is the moſt indiſſoluble, the moſt virtuous, and the moſt efficient of its own decrees that can be

Digitized by Google

be imagined. Every country, poſſeſſed of any degree of ſtrength, have had their enthuſiaſms, which ever ſerve as laws among the people. The Greeks had their *Kalokagathia*, the Romans their *Amor Patriæ*, and we the truer and firmer bond of the *Proteſtant religion*. The principle is the ſame in all; how much then is it the duty of thoſe, whom the law has appointed teachers of this religion, to enforce its obligations, and to raiſe thoſe enthuſiaſms among people, by which alone political ſociety can ſubſiſt.

From eloquence therefore the morals of our people are to expect emendation; but how little can they be improved by men, who get into the pulpit rather to ſhew their parts than convince us of the truth of what they deliver, who are painfully correct in their ſtyle, muſical in their tones, where every ſentiment, every expreſſion, ſeems the reſult of meditation and deep ſtudy?

Tillotſon has been commended as the model of pulpit eloquence; thus far he ſhould be imitated, where he generally ſtrives to convince rather than to pleaſe; but to adopt his long, dry, and ſometimes tedious diſcuſſions, which ſerve to amuſe only divines, and are utterly neglected by the generality of mankind, to praiſe the intricacy of his periods, which are too long to be ſpoken, to continue his cool phlegmatic manner of enforcing every truth, is certainly erroneous. As I ſaid before, the good preacher ſhould adopt no model, write no ſermons, ſtudy no periods; let him but underſtand his ſubject, the language he ſpeaks, and be convinced of the truths he delivers. It is amazing to what heights eloquence of this kind may reach! This is that eloquence the antients repreſented as lightning, bearing down every oppoſer; this the power which has turned whole aſſemblies into aſtoniſhment, admiration, and awe, that is deſcribed by the torrent, the flame, and every other inſtance of irreſiſtible impetuoſity.

Digitized by Google

But to attempt ſuch noble heights belongs only to the truly great, or the truly good. To diſcard the lazy maner of reading ſermons, or ſpeaking ſermons by rote; to ſet up ſingly againſt the oppoſition of men, who are attached to their own errors, and to endeavour to be great inſtead of being prudent, are qualities we ſeldom ſee united. A miniſter of the Church of England, who may be poſſeſſed of good ſenſe and ſome hopes of preferment, will ſeldom give up ſuch ſubſtantial advantages for the empty pleaſure of improving ſociety. By his preſent method he is liked by his friends, admired by his dependants, not diſpleaſing to his biſhop; he lives as well, eats and ſleeps as well, as if a real orator, and an eager aſſerter of his miſſion; he will hardly therefore venture all this to be called perhaps an enthuſiaſt; nor will he depart from cuſtoms eſtabliſhed by the brotherhood, when by ſuch a conduct he only ſingles himſelf out for their contempt.

CUSTOM AND LAWS COMPARED.

WHAT, ſay ſome, can give us a more contemptible idea of a large ſtate than to find it moſtly governed by cuſtom; to have few written laws, and no boundaries to mark the juriſdiction between the ſenate and people? Among the number who ſpeak in this manner is the great Monteſquieu, who aſſerts that every nation is free in proportion to the number of its written laws, and ſeems to hint at a deſpotic and arbitrary conduct in the preſent king of Pruſſia, who has abridged the laws of his country into a very ſhort compaſs.

As

Digitized by Google

As Tacitus and Monteſquieu happen to differ in ſentiment upon a ſubject of ſo much importance, (for the Roman expreſſly aſſerts that the ſtate is generally vicious in proportion to the number of its laws); it will not be amiſs to examine it a little more minutely, and ſee whether a ſtate, which like England is burthened with a multiplicity of written laws, or which like Switzerland, Geneva, and ſome other republics, is governed by cuſtom and the determination of the judge, is beſt.

And to prove the ſuperiority of cuſtom to written law we ſhall at leaſt find hiſtory conſpiring. Cuſtom or the traditional obſervance of the practice of their forefathers, was what directed the Romans as well in their public as private determinations. Cuſtom was appealed to in pronouncing ſentence againſt a criminal, where part of the formulary was *more majorum*. So Salluſt ſpeaking of the expulſion of Tarquin, ſays, *mutato more*, and not *lege mutata*; and Virgil, *paciſque imponere morem*. So that in thoſe times of the empire, in which the people retained their liberty, they were governed by cuſtom; when they ſunk into oppreſſion and tyranny, they were reſtrained by new laws, and the laws of tradition aboliſhed.

As getting the antients on our ſide is half a victory, it will not be amiſs to fortify the argument with an obſervation of Chryſoſtom's; "That the "enſlaved are the fitteſt to be governed by laws, "and free men by cuſtom." Cuſtom partakes of the nature of parental injunction; it is kept by the people themſelves, and obſerved with a willing obedience. The obſervance of it muſt therefore be a mark of freedom, and coming originally to a ſtate from the reverenced founders of its liberty, will be an encouragement and aſſiſtance to it in the defence of that bleſſing; but a conquered people, a nation of

Digitized by Google

ſlaves, muſt pretend to none of this freedom, or theſe happy diſtinctions, having by degeneracy loſt all right to their brave forefathers free inſtitutions, their maſters will in a policy take the forfeiture; and the fixing a conqueſt muſt be done by giving laws, which may every moment ſerve to remind the people enſlaved of their conquerors, nothing being more dangerous than to truſt a late-ſubdued people with old cuſtoms, that preſently upbraid their degeneracy, and provoke them to revolt.

The wiſdom of the Roman republic in their veneration for cuſtom, and backwardneſs to introduce a new law, was perhaps the cauſe of their long continuance, and of the virtues of which they have ſet the world ſo many examples. But to ſhew in what that wiſdom conſiſts, it may be proper to obſerve, that the benefit of new-written laws are merely confined to the conſequences of their obſervance; but cuſtomary laws, keeping up a veneration for the founders, engage men in the imitation of their virtues as well as policy. To this may be aſcribed the religious regard the Romans paid to their forefathers memory, and their adhering for ſo many ages to the practice of the ſame virtues, which nothing contributed more to efface than the introduction of a voluminous body of new laws over the neck of venerable cuſtom.

The ſimplicity, conciſeneſs, and antiquity of cuſtom gives an air of majeſty and immutability that inſpires awe and veneration; but new laws are too apt to be voluminous, perplexed, and indeterminate; whence muſt neceſſarily ariſe neglect, contempt, and ignorance.

As every human inſtitution is ſubject to groſs imperfections, ſo laws muſt neceſſarily be liable to the ſame inconveniencies, and their defects ſoon diſcovered. Thus, through the weakneſs of one part, all

Digitized by Google

all the reſt are liable to be brought into contempt. But ſuch weakneſſes in a cuſtom, for very obvious reaſons, evade an examination; beſides, a friendly prejudice always ſtands up in their favour.

But let us ſuppoſe a new law to be perfectly equitable and neceſſary; yet, if the procurers of it have betrayed a conduct that confeſſes by-ends and private motives, the diſguſt to the circumſtances diſpoſes us, unreaſonably indeed, to an irreverence of the law itſelf; but we are indulgently blind to the moſt viſible imperfections of an old cuſtom. Though we perceive the defects ourſelves, yet we remain perſuaded that our wiſe forefathers had good reaſon for what they did; and though ſuch motives no longer continue, the benefit will ſtill go along with the obſervance, though we don't know how. It is thus the Roman lawyers ſpeak: *Non omnium, quæ a majoribus conſtituta ſunt, ratio reddi poteſt, et ideo rationes eorum quæ conſtituuntur inquiri non oportet, alioquin multa ex his quæ certa ſunt ſubvertuntur.*

Thoſe laws, which preſerve to themſelves the greateſt love and obſervance, muſt needs be beſt; but cuſtom, as it executes itſelf, muſt be neceſſarily ſuperior to written laws in this reſpect, which are to be executed by another. Thus nothing can be more certain than that numerous written laws are a ſign of a degenerate community, and are frequently not the conſequences of vicious morals in a ſtate, but the cauſes.

Hence we ſee how much greater benefit it would be to the ſtate rather to abridge than increaſe its laws. We every day find them increaſing; acts and reports, which may be termed the acts of judges, are every day becoming more voluminous, and loading the ſubject with new penalties.

Laws ever increaſe in number and ſeverity, until they at length are ſtrained ſo tight as to break themſelves.

Digitized by Google

themſelves. Such was the caſe of the latter empire, whoſe laws were at length become ſo ſtrict, that the barbarous invaders did not bring ſervitude but liberty.

OF THE PRIDE AND LUXURY OF THE MIDDLING CLASS OF PEOPLE.

OF all the follies and abſurdities, under which this great metropolis labours, there is not one, I believe, that at preſent appears in a more glaring and ridiculous light than the pride and luxury of the middling claſs of people; their eager deſire of being ſeen in a ſphere far above their capacities and circumſtances is daily nay hourly inſtanced by the prodigious numbers of mechanics, who flock to the races, and gaming-tables, brothels, and all public diverſions this faſhionable town affords.

You ſhall ſee a grocer, or a tallow-chandler, ſneak from behind the compter, clap on a laced coat and a bag, fly to the E. O. table, throw away fifty peices with ſome ſharping man of quality; while his induſtrious wife is ſelling a penny-worth of ſugar, or a pound of candles, to ſupport her faſhionable ſpouſe in his extravagances.

I was led into this reflection by an odd adventure, which happened to me the other day at Epſom races, whither I went, not through any deſire I do aſſure you of laying betts or winning thouſands, but at the earneſt requeſt of a friend, who had long indulged the curioſity of ſeeng the ſport, very natural for an Engliſhman. When we had arrived at the courſe, and had taken ſeveral turns to obſerve the different

Digitized by Google

different objects that made up this whimsical groupe, a figure suddenly darted by us, mounted and dressed in all the elegance of those polite gentry, who come to shew you they have a little money, and rather than pay their just debts at home generously come abroad to bestow it on gamblers and pickpockets. As I had not an opportunity of viewing his face till his return, I gently walked after him, and met him as he came back, when to my no small surprise I beheld in this gay Narcissus the visage of Jack Varnish, an humble vender of prints. Disgusted at the sight, I pulled my friend by the sleeve, pressed him to return home, telling him all the way, that I was so enraged at the fellow's impudence, I was resolved never to lay out another penny with him.

And now, pray sir, let me beg of you to give this a place in your paper, that Mr. Varnish may understand he mistakes the thing quite, if he imagines horse-racing recommendable in a tradesman; and that he, who is revelling every night in the arms of a common strumpet (though blessed with an indulgent wife) when he ought to be minding his business, will never thrive in this world. He will find himself soon mistaken, his finances decrease, his friends shun him, customers fall off, and himself thrown into a gaol. I would earnestly recommend this adage to every mechanic in London, "Keep "your shop, and your shop will keep you." A strict observance of these words will, I am sure, in time gain them estates. Industry is the road to wealth, and honesty to happiness; and he, who strenuously endeavours to pursue them both, may never fear the critic's lash, or the sharp cries of penury and want.

SABINUS

Digitized by Google

SABINUS AND OLINDA.

IN a fair, rich, and flouriſhing country, whoſe clifts are waſhed by the German ocean, lived Sabinus, a youth formed by Nature to make a conqueſt wherever he thought proper; but the conſtancy of his diſpoſition fixed him only with Olinda. He was indeed ſuperior to her in fortune, but that defect on her ſide was ſo amply ſupplied by her merit, that none was thought more worthy of his regards than ſhe. He loved her, he was beloved by her; and in a ſhort time, by joining hands publickly, they avowed the union of their hearts. But alas! none, however fortunate, however happy, are exempt from the ſhafts of envy, and the malignant effects of ungoverned appetite. How unſafe, how deteſtable are they who have this fury for their guide! How certainly will it lead them from themſelves, and plunge them in errors they would have ſhuddered at, even in apprehenſion! Ariana, a lady of many amiable qualities, very nearly allied to Sabinus, and highly eſteemed by him, imagined herſelf ſlighted, and injuriouſly treated, ſince his marriage with Olinda. By uncautiouſly ſuffering this jealouſy to corrode in her breaſt, ſhe began to give a looſe to paſſion; ſhe forgot thoſe many virtues, for which ſhe had been ſo long and ſo juſtly applauded. Cauſeleſs ſuſpicion and miſtaken reſentment betrayed her into all the gloom of diſcontent; ſhe ſighed without ceaſing; the happineſs of others gave her intolerable pain; ſhe thought of nothing but revenge. How unlike what ſhe was, the cheerful, the prudent, the compaſſionate Ariana!

She continually laboured to diſturb an union ſo firmly, ſo affectionately founded, and planned every ſcheme which ſhe thought moſt likely to diſturb it.

Digitized by Google

Fortune ſeemed willing to promote her unjuſt intentions; the circumſtances of Sabinus had been long embarraſſed by a tedious lawſuit, and the court determining the cauſe unexpectedly in favour of his opponent, it ſunk his fortune to the loweſt pitch of penury from the higheſt affluence. From the nearneſs of relationſhip Sabinus expected from Ariana thoſe aſſiſtances his preſent ſituation required; but ſhe was inſenſible to all his entreaties, and the juſtice of every remonſtrance, unleſs he firſt ſeparated from Olinda, whom ſhe regarded with deteſtation. Upon a compliance with her deſires in this reſpect, ſhe promiſed that her fortune, her intereſt, and her all, ſhould be at his command. Sabinus was ſhocked at the propoſal; he loved his wife with inexpreſſible tenderneſs, and refuſed thoſe offers with indignation, which were to be purchaſed at ſo high a price. Ariana was no leſs diſpleaſed to find her offers rejected, and gave a looſe to all that warmth, which ſhe had long endeavoured to ſuppreſs. Reproach generally produces recrimination; the quarrel roſe to ſuch a height, that Sabinus was marked for deſtruction; and the very next day, upon the ſtrength of an old family debt, he was ſent to gaol, with none but Olinda to comfort him in his miſeries. In this manſion of diſtreſs they lived together with reſignation and even with comfort. She provided the frugal meal; and he read to her while employed in the little offices of domeſtic concern. Their fellow priſoners admired their contentment, and whenever they had a deſire of relaxing into mirth, and enjoying thoſe little comforts that a priſon affords, Sabinus and Olinda were ſure to be of the party. Inſtead of reproaching each other for their mutual wretchedneſs, they both lightened it, by bearing each a ſhare of the load impoſed by Providence. Whenever Sabinus ſhewed the leaſt concern on his dear

Digitized by Google

dear partner's account, ſhe conjured him by the love he bore her, by thoſe tender ties which now united them for ever, not to diſcompoſe himſelf; that ſo long as his affection laſted, ſhe defied all the ills of fortune, and every loſs of fame or friendſhip; that nothing could make her miſerable but his ſeeming to want happineſs, nothing pleaſed but his ſympathiſing with her pleaſure. A continuance in priſon ſoon robbed them of the little they had left, and famine began to make its horrid appearance; yet ſtill was neither found to murmur; they both looked upon their little boy, who inſenſible of their or his own diſtreſs was playing about the room, with inexpreſſible yet ſilent anguiſh, when a meſſenger came to inform them that Ariana was dead, and that her will in favour of a very diſtant relation, who was now in another country, might eaſily be procured and burnt, in which caſe all her large fortune would revert to him as being the next heir at law.

A propoſal of ſo baſe a nature filled our unhappy couple with horror; they ordered the meſſenger immediately out of the room, and falling upon each other's neck indulged an agony of ſorrow; for now even all hopes of relief were baniſhed. The meſſenger who made the propoſal, however, was only a ſpy ſent by Ariana to ſound the diſpoſitions of a man ſhe loved at once and perſecuted. This lady, though warped by wrong paſſions, was naturally kind, judicious, and friendly. She found that all her attempts to ſhake the conſtancy or the integrity of Sabinus were ineffectual; ſhe had therefore begun to reflect, and to wonder how ſhe could ſo long and ſo unprovoked injure ſuch uncommon fortitude and affection.

She had from the next room herſelf heard the reception given to the meſſenger, and could not avoid feeling all the force of ſuperior virtue; ſhe therefore

Digitized by Google

therefore re-aſſumed her former goodneſs of heart; ſhe came into the room with tears in her eyes, and acknowledged the ſeverity of her former treatment. She beſtowed her firſt care in providing them all the neceſſary ſupplies, and acknowledged them as the moſt deſerving heirs of her fortune. From this moment Sabinus enjoyed an uninterrupted happineſs with Olinda, and both were happy in the friendſhip and aſſiſtance of Ariana, who, dying ſoon after, left them in poſſeſſion of a large eſtate, and in her laſt moments confeſſed that virtue was the only path to true glory; and that, however innocence may for a time be depreſſed, a ſteady perſeverance will in time lead it to a certain victory.

THE SENTIMENTS OF A FRENCHMAN ON THE TEMPER OF THE ENGLISH.

NOTHING is ſo uncommon among the Engliſh as that eaſy affability, that inſtant method of acquaintance, or that cheerfulneſs of diſpoſition, which make in France the charm of every ſociety. Yet in this gloomy reſerve they ſeem to pride themſelves, and think themſelves leſs happy, if obliged to be more ſocial. One may aſſert, without wronging them, that they do not ſtudy the method of going through life with pleaſure and tranquillity like the French. Might not this be a proof that they are not ſo much philoſophers as they imagine? Philoſophy is no more than the art of making ourſelves happy; that is of ſeeking pleaſure in regularity, and reconciling what we owe to ſociety with what is due to ourſelves.

Digitized by Google

This cheerfulneſs, which is the characteriſtic of our nation in the eye of an Engliſhman, paſſes almoſt for folly. But is their gloomineſs a greater mark of their wiſdom? and folly againſt folly is not the moſt cheerful ſort the beſt. If our gaiety makes them ſad, they ought not to find it ſtrange, if their ſerioufneſs makes us laugh.

As this diſpoſition to levity is not familiar to them, and as they look on every thing as a fault which they do not find at home, the Engliſh, who live among us, are hurt by it. Several of their authors reproach us with it as a vice, or at leaſt as a ridicule.

Mr. Addiſon ſtyles us a comic nation. In my opinion it is not acting the philoſopher on this point, to regard as a fault that quality, which contributes moſt to the pleaſure of ſociety and happineſs of life. Plato, convinced that whatever makes men happier, makes them better, adviſes to neglect nothing that may excite and convert to an early habit this ſenſe of joy in children. Seneca places it in the firſt rank of good things. Certain it is at leaſt, that gaiety may be a concomitant of all ſorts of virtue, but that there are ſome vices with which it is incompatible.

As to him who laughs at every thing, and him who laughs at nothing, neither of them has ſound judgment. All the difference I find between them is, that the laſt is conſtantly the moſt unhappy. Thoſe, who ſpeak againſt cheerfulneſs, prove nothing elſe, but that they were born melancholic, and that in their hearts they rather envy than condemn that levity they affect to deſpiſe.

The Spectator, whoſe conſtant object was the good of mankind in general, and of his own nation in particular, ſhould according to his own principles place cheerfulneſs among the moſt deſirable qualities; and probably, whenever he contradicts himſelf in this particular, it is only to conform to the

Digitized by Google

the tempers of the people whom he addreſſes. He aſſerts that gaiety is one great obſtacle to the prudent conduct of women. But are thoſe of a melancholic temper, as the Engliſh women generally are, leſs ſubject to the foibles of love? I am acquainted with ſome doctors in this ſcience, to whoſe judgment I would more willingly refer than to his. And perhaps in reality, perſons naturally of a gay temper are too eaſily taken off by different objects, to give themſelves up to all the exceſſes of this paſſion.

Mr. Hobbes, a celebrated philoſopher of his nation, maintains that laughing proceeds from our pride alone. This is only a paradox if aſſerted of laughing in general, and only argues that miſanthropical diſpoſition for which he was remarkable.

To bring the cauſes he aſſigns for laughing under ſuſpicion, it is ſufficient to remark that proud people are commonly thoſe who laugh leaſt. Gravity is the inſeparable companion of pride. To ſay that a man is vain, becauſe the humour of a writer, or the buffooneries of an harlequin excite his laughter, would be advancing a great abſurdity. We ſhould diſtinguiſh between laughter inſpired by joy, and that which ariſes from mockery. The malicious ſneer is improperly called laughter. It muſt be owned that pride is the parent of ſuch laughter as this; but this is in itſelf vicious; whereas, the other ſort has nothing in its principles or effects that deſerves condemnation. We find this amiable in others, and is it unhappineſs to feel a diſpoſition towards it in ourſelves?

When I ſee an Engliſhman laugh, I fancy I rather ſee him hunting after joy, than having caught it; and this is more particularly remarkable in their women, whoſe tempers are inclined to melancholy. A laugh leaves no more traces on their countenance than a flaſh of lightning on the face of the heavens.

Digitized by Google

The moſt laughing air is inſtantly ſucceeded by the moſt gloomy. One would be apt to think that their ſouls open with difficulty to joy, or at leaſt that joy is not pleaſed with its habitation there.

In regard to fine raillery it muſt be allowed that it is not natural to the Engliſh, and therefore thoſe who endeavour at it make but an ill figure. Some of their authors have candidly confeſſed, that pleaſantry is quite foreign to their character; but according to the reaſon they give, they loſe nothing by this confeſſion. Biſhop Sprat gives the following one; "The Engliſh, "ſays he," have too much bravery to "be derided, and too much virtue and honour to "mock others."

THE

Digitized by Google

THE BEE, Nº VIII.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1759.

ON DECEIT AND FALSHOOD.

The following account is ſo judiciouſly conceived, that I am convinced the reader will be more pleaſed with it, than with any thing of mine, ſo I ſhall make no apology for this new publication.

TO THE AUTHOR OF THE BEE.

SIR,

DECEIT and falſhood have ever been an overmatch for truth, and followed and admired by the majority of mankind. If we inquire after the reaſon of this, we ſhall find it in our own imaginations, which are amuſed and entertained with the perpetual novelty and variety that fiction affords, but find no manner of delight in the uniform ſimplicity of homely truth, which ſtill ſues them under the ſame appearance.

He therefore that would gain our hearts muſt make his court to our fancy, which being ſovereign comptroller of the paſſions, lets them looſe, and inflames them more or leſs, in proportion to the force and efficacy of the firſt cauſe, which is ever

Digitized by Google

the more powerful the more new it is. Thus in mathematical demonſtrations themſelves, though they ſeem to aim at pure truth and inſtruction, and to be addreſſed to our reaſon alone, yet I think it is pretty plain, that our underſtanding is only made a drudge to gratify our invention and curioſity, and we are pleaſed not ſo much becauſe our diſcoveries are certain, as becauſe they are new.

I do not deny but the world is ſtill pleaſed with things that pleaſed it many ages ago, but it ſhould at the ſame time be conſidered, that man is naturally ſo much of a logician, as to diſtinguiſh between matters that are plain and eaſy, and others that are hard and inconceivable. What we underſtand we overlook and deſpiſe, and what we know nothing of we hug and delight in. Thus there are ſuch things as perpetual novelties; for we are pleaſed no longer than we are amazed, and nothing ſo much contents us as that which confounds us.

This weakneſs in human nature gave occaſion to a party of men to make ſuch gainful markets as they have done of our credulity. All objects and facts whatever now ceaſed to be what they had been for ever before, and received what make and meaning it was found convenient to put upon them: what people ate, and drank, and ſaw, was not what they ate, and drank, and ſaw, but ſomething farther, which they were fond of, becauſe they were ignorant of it. In ſhort nothing was itſelf, but ſomething beyond itſelf; and by theſe artifices and amuſements the heads of the world were ſo turned and intoxicated, that at laſt there was ſcarcely a ſound ſet of brains left in it.

In this ſtate of giddineſs and infatuation it was no very hard taſk to perſuade the already deluded, that there was an actual ſociety and communion between human creatures and ſpiritual dæmons. And when they had thus put people into the power and clutches of

Digitized by Google

of the devil, none but they alone could have either ſkill or ſtrength to bring the priſoners back again.

But ſo far did they carry this dreadful drollery, and ſo fond were they of it, that to maintain it and themſelves in profitable repute, they literally ſacrificed for it, and made impious victims of numberleſs old women and other miſerable perſons, who either through ignorance could not ſay what they were bid to ſay, or through madneſs ſaid what they ſhould not have ſaid. Fear and ſtupidity made them incapable of defending themſelves, and frenzy and infatuation made them confeſs *guilty impoſſibilities*, which produced cruel ſentences and then inhuman executions.

Some of theſe wretched mortals finding themſelves either hateful or terrible to all, and befriended by none, and perhaps wanting the common neceſſaries of life, came at laſt to abhor themſelves as much as they were abhorred by others, and grew willing to be burnt or hanged out of a world, which was no other to them than a ſcene of perſecution and anguiſh.

Others of ſtrong imaginations and little underſtandings were by poſitive and repeated charges againſt them, of committing miſchievous and ſupernatural facts and villanies, deluded to judge of themſelves by the judgment of their enemies, whoſe weakneſs or malice prompted them to be accuſers. And many have been condemned as witches and dealers with the devil for no other reaſon but their knowing more than thoſe who accuſed, tried, and paſſed ſentence upon them.

In theſe caſes credulity is a much greater error than infidelity, and it is ſafer to believe nothing than too much. A man, that believes little or nothing of witchcraft, will deſtroy nobody for being under the imputation of it; and ſo far he certainly

Digitized by Google

acts with humanity to others, and safety to himself: but he that credits all, or too much upon that article, is obliged, if he acts consistently with his persuasion, to kill all those whom he takes to be the killers of mankind; and such are witches. It would be a jest and a contradiction to say, that he is for sparing them who are harmless of that tribe, since the received notion of their supposed contract with the devil implies that they are engaged by covenant and inclination to do all the mischief they possibly can.

I have heard many stories of witches, and read many accusations against them; but I do not remember any, that would have induced me to have consigned over to the halter or the flame any of those deplorable wretches, who, as they share our likeness and nature, ought to share our compassion, as persons cruelly accused of impossibilities.

But we love to delude ourselves, and often fancy or forge an effect, and then set ourselves as gravely as ridiculously to find out the cause. Thus, for example, when a dream, or the hyp has given us false terrors, or imaginary pains, we immediately conclude that the infernal tyrant owes us a spite, and inflicts his wrath and stripes upon us by the hands of some of his sworn servants amongst us. For this end an old woman is promoted to a seat in Satan's privy council, and appointed his executioner in chief within her district. So ready and civil are we to allow the devil the dominion over us, and even to provide him with butchers and hangmen of our own make and nature.

I have often wondered why we did not, in chusing our proper officers for Belzebub, lay the lot rather upon men than women, the former being more bold and robust, and more equal to that bloody service; but upon enquiry I find it has been so ordered

Digitized by Google

ordered for two reaſons; firſt, the men, having the whole direction of this affair, are wiſe enough to ſlip their own necks out of the collar; and ſecondly an old woman is grown by cuſtom the moſt avoided and moſt unpitied creature under the ſun, the very name carrying contempt and ſatire in it. And ſo far indeed we pay but an uncourtly ſort of reſpect to Satan, in ſacrificing to him nothing but the dry ſticks of human nature.

We have a *wondering quality* within us, which finds huge gratification when we ſee ſtrange feats done, and cannot at the ſame time ſee the doer, or the cauſe. Such actions are ſure to be attributed to ſome witch or dæmon; for if we come to find they are ſlily performed by artiſts of our own ſpecies, and by cauſes purely natural, our delight dies with our amazement.

It is therefore one of the moſt unthankful offices in the world, to go about to expoſe the miſtaken notions of witchcraft and ſpirits; it is robbing mankind of a valuable imagination, and of the privilege of being deceived. Thoſe, who at any time undertook the taſk, have always met with rough treatment and ill language for their pains, and ſeldom eſcaped the imputation of atheiſm, becauſe they would not allow the devil to be too powerful for the Almighty. For my part, I am ſo much a heretic as to believe, that God Almighty, and not the devil, governs the world.

If we inquire what are the common marks and ſymptoms, by which witches are diſcovered to be ſuch, we ſhall ſee how reaſonably and mercifully thoſe poor creatures were burnt and hanged, who unhappily fell under that name.

In the firſt place the old woman muſt be prodigiouſly ugly; her eyes hollow and red, her face ſhrivelled; ſhe goes double, and her voice trembles.

Digitized by Google

bles. It frequently happens, that this rueful figure frightens a child into the palpitation of the heart: home he runs, and tells his mamma, that goody ſuch a one looked at him, and he is very ill. The good woman cries out, her dear baby is bewitched, and ſends for the parſon and the conſtable.

It is moreover neceſſary, that ſhe be very poor. It is true, her maſter *Satan* has mines and hidden treaſures in his gift; but no matter, ſhe is for all that very poor, and lives on alms. She goes to *Siſly* the cook maid for a diſh of broth, or the heel of a loaf, and *Siſly* denies them to her. The old woman goes away muttering, and perhaps in leſs than a month's time *Siſly* hears the voice of a cat, and ſtrains her ancles, which are certain ſigns that ſhe is bewitched.

A farmer ſees his cattle die of the murrain, and the ſheep of the rot, and poor goody is forced to be the cauſe of their death, becauſe ſhe was ſeen talking to herſelf the evening before ſuch an ewe departed, and had been gathering ſticks at the ſide of the wood where ſuch a cow run mad.

The old woman has always for her companion an old grey cat, which is a diſguiſed devil too, and confederate with goody in works of darkneſs. They frequently go journies into *Egypt* upon a broom-ſtaff in half an hour's time, and now and then goody and her cat change ſhapes. The neighbours often over-hear them in deep and ſolemn diſcourſe together, plotting ſome dreadful miſchief you may be ſure.

There is a famous way of trying witches, recommended by king James I. The old woman is tied hand and foot, and thrown into the river, and if ſhe ſwims ſhe is guilty, and taken out and burnt; but if ſhe is innocent, ſhe ſinks, and is only drowned.

The

Digitized by Google

The witches are ſaid to meet their maſter frequently in churches and church-yards. I wonder at the boldneſs of Satan and his congregation, in revelling and playing mountebank farces on conſecrated ground; and I have as often wondered at the overſight and ill policy of ſome people in allowing it poſſible.

It would have been both dangerous and impious to have treated this ſubject at one certain time in this ludicrous manner. It uſed to be managed with all poſſible gravity, and even terror; and indeed it was made a tragedy in all its parts, and thouſands were ſacrificed or rather murdered by ſuch evidence and colours, as, God be thanked! we are at this day aſhamed of. An old woman may be *miſerable now*, and not be *hanged* for it.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

AUGUSTAN AGE OF ENGLAND.

THE hiſtory of the riſe of language and learning is calculated to gratify curioſity rather than to ſatisfy the underſtanding. An account of that period only, when language and learning arrived at its higheſt perfection, is the moſt conducive to real improvement, ſince it at once raiſes emulation and directs to the proper objects. The age of Leo X. in Italy is confeſſed to be the Auguſtan age with them. The French writers ſeem agreed to give the ſame appellation to that of Lewis XIV. but the Engliſh are yet undetermined with reſpect to themſelves.

Some

Digitized by Google

Some have looked upon the writers in the times of Queen Elizabeth as the true ſtandard for future imitation; others have deſcended to the reign of James I. and others ſtill lower, to that of Charles II. Were I to be permitted to offer an opinion upon this ſubject, I ſhould readily give my vote for the reign of Queen Anne, or ſome years before that period. It was then that taſte was united to genius, and, as before, our writers charmed with their ſtrength of thinking, ſo then they pleaſed with ſtrength and grace united. In that period of Britiſh glory, though no writer attracts our attention ſingly; yet, like ſtars loſt in each other's brightneſs, they have caſt ſuch a luſtre upon the age in which they lived, that their minuteſt tranſactions will be attended to by poſterity with a greater eagerneſs, than the moſt important occurrences of even empires, which have been tranſacted in greater obſcurity.

At that period there ſeemed to be a juſt balance between patronage and the preſs. Before it men were little eſteemed, whoſe only merit was genius; and ſince men, who can prudently be content to catch the public, are certain of living without dependance. But the writers of the period of which I am ſpeaking, were ſufficiently eſteemed by the great, and not rewarded enough by bookſellers, to ſet them above independance. Fame conſequently then was the trueſt road to happineſs; a ſedulous attention to the mechanical buſineſs of the day makes the preſent never-failing reſource.

The age of Charles II, which our countrymen term the age of wit and immorality, produced ſome writers that at once ſerved to improve our language and corrupt our hearts. The king himſelf had a large ſhare of knowledge, and ſome wit, and his courtiers were generally men, who had been brought up in the ſchool of affliction and experience. For this

Digitized by Google

this reaſon, when the ſunſhine of their fortune returned, they gave too great a looſe to pleaſure, and language was by them cultivated only as a mode of elegance. Hence it became more enervated, and was daſhed with quaintneſſes, which gave the public writings of thoſe times a very illiberal air.

L'Eſtrange, who was by no means ſo bad a writer as ſome have repreſented him, was ſunk in party faction, and having generally the worſt ſide of the argument often had recourſe to ſcolding, pertneſs, and conſequently a vulgarity, that diſcovers itſelf even in his more liberal compoſitions. He was the firſt writer, who regularly enliſted himſelf under the banners of a party for pay, and fought for it through right and wrong for upwards of forty literary campaigns. This intrepidity gained him the eſteem of Cromwell himſelf, and the papers he wrote even juſt before the revolution, almoſt with the rope about his neck, have his uſual characters of impudence and perſeverance. That he was a ſtandard-writer cannot be diſowned, becauſe a great many very eminent authors formed their ſtyle by his. But his ſtandard was far from being a juſt one; though, when party conſiderations are ſet aſide, he certainly was poſſeſſed of elegance, eaſe, and perſpicuity.

Dryden, though a great and undiſputed genius, had the ſame caſt as L'Eſtrange. Even his plays diſcover him to be a party-man, and the ſame principle infects his ſtyle in ſubjects of the lighteſt nature; but the Engliſh tongue, as it ſtands at preſent, is greatly his debtor. He firſt gave it regular harmony, and diſcovered its latent powers. It was his pen that formed the Congreves, the Priors, and the Addiſons, who ſucceeded him; and had it not been for Dryden, we never ſhould have known a Pope, at leaſt in the meridian luſtre he now diſplays. But Dryden's excellencies as a writer were not confined

Digitized by Google

confined to poetry alone. There is in his proſe writings an eaſe and elegance, that have never yet been ſo well united in works of taſte or criticiſm.

The Engliſh language owes very little to Otway, though, next to Shakeſpeare, the greateſt genius England ever produced in tragedy. His excellencies lay in painting directly from nature, in catching every emotion juſt as it riſes from the ſoul, and in all the powers of the moving and pathetic. He appears to have had no learning, no critical knowledge, and to have lived in great diſtreſs. When he died, (which he did in an obſcure houſe near the Minories) he had about him the copy of a tragedy, which it ſeems he had ſold for a trifle to Bentley the bookſeller. I have ſeen an advertiſement at the end of one of L'Eſtrange's political papers, offering a reward to any one who ſhould bring it to his ſhop. What an invaluable treaſure was there irretrievably loſt, by the ignorance and neglect of the age he lived in!

Lee had a great command of language, and vaſt force of expreſſion, both which the beſt of our ſucceeding dramatic poets thought proper to take for their models. Rowe in particular ſeems to have caught that manner, though in all other reſpects inferior. The other poets of that reign contributed but little towards improving the Engliſh tongue, and it is not certain whether they did not injure rather than improve it. Immorality has its cant as well as party, and many ſhocking expreſſions now crept into the language, and became the tranſient faſhion of the day. The upper galleries, by the prevalence of party-ſpirit, were courted with great aſſiduity, and a horſe-laugh following ribaldry was the higheſt inſtance of applauſe, the chaſtity as well as energy of diction being overlooked or neglected.

Virtuous

Digitized by Google

Virtuous ſentiment was recovered, but energy of ſtyle never was. This, though diſregarded in plays and party-writings, ſtill prevailed amongſt men of character and buſineſs. The diſpatches of Sir Richard Fanſhaw, Sir William Godolphin, Lord Arlington, and many other miniſters of ſtate, are all of them, with reſpect to diction, manly, bold and nervous. Sir William Temple, though a man of no learning, had great knowledge and experience. He wrote always like a man of ſenſe and a gentleman; and his ſtyle is the model, by which the beſt proſe writers in the reign of Queen Anne formed theirs. The beauties of Mr. Locke's ſtyle, though not ſo much celebrated, are as ſtriking as that of his underſtanding. He never ſays more nor leſs than he ought, and never makes uſe of a word that he could have changed for a better. The ſame obſervation holds good of Dr. Samuel Clarke.

Mr. Locke was a philoſopher; his antagoniſt Stillingfleet, biſhop of Worceſter, was a man of learning, and therefore the conteſt between them was unequal. The clearneſs of Mr. Locke's head renders his language perſpicuous, the learning of Stillingfleet's clouds his. This is an inſtance of the ſuperiority of good ſenſe over learning, towards the improvement of every language.

There is nothing peculiar to the language of archbiſhop Tillotſon, but his manner of writing is inimitable; for one who reads him, wonders why he himſelf did not think and ſpeak in that very manner. The turn of his periods is agreeable, though artleſs, and every thing he ſays ſeems to flow ſpontaneouſly from inward conviction. Barrow, though greatly his ſuperior in learning, falls ſhort of him in other reſpects.

The time ſeems to be at hand, when juſtice will be done to Mr Cowley's proſe, as well as poetical writings;

Digitized by Google

writings; and though his friend Doctor Sprat, biſhop of Rocheſter, in his diction falls far ſhort of the abilities for which he has been celebrated; yet there is ſometimes an happy flow in his periods, ſomething that looks like eloquence. The ſtyle of his ſucceſſor Atterbury has been much commended by his friends, which always happens when a man diſtinguiſhes himſelf in party, but there is in it nothing extraordinary. Even the ſpeech which he made for himſelf at the bar of the houſe of Lords, before he was ſent into exile, is void of eloquence, though it has been cried up by his friends to ſuch a degree, that his enemies have ſuffered it to paſs uncenſured.

The philoſophical manner of Lord Shafteſbury's writing is nearer to that of Cicero than any Engliſh author has yet arrived at, but perhaps had Cicero written in Engliſh, his compoſition would have greatly exceeded that of our countryman. The diction of the latter is beautiful, but ſuch beauty, as upon nearer inſpection, carries with it evident ſymptoms of affectation. This has been attended with very diſagreeable conſequences. Nothing is ſo eaſy to copy as affectation, and his lordſhip's rank and fame have procured him more imitators in Britain than any other writer I know; all faithfully preſerving his blemiſhes, but unhappily not one of his beauties.

Mr. Trenchard and Dr. Davenant were political writers of great abilities in diction, and their pamphlets are now ſtandards in that way of writing. They were followed by Dean Swift, who, though in other reſpects far their ſuperior, never could ariſe to that manlineſs and clearneſs of diction in political writing, for which they were ſo juſtly famous.

They

Digitized by Google

They were all of them exceeded by the late Lord Bolingbroke, whose ſtrength lay in that province; for as a philoſopher and a critic he was ill qualified, being deſtitute of virtue for the one, and of learning for the other. His writings againſt Sir Robert Walpole are incomparably the beſt part of his works. The perſonal and perpetual antipathy he had for that family, to whoſe places he thought his own abilities had a right, gave a glow to his ſtyle, and an edge to his manner, that never yet have been equalled in political writing. His misfortunes and diſappointments gave his mind a turn, which his friends miſtook for philoſophy, and at one time of his life he had the art to impoſe the ſame belief upon ſome of his enemies. His idea of a patriot king, which I reckon (as indeed it was) amongſt his writings againſt Sir Robert Walpole, is a maſter-piece of diction. Even in his other works his ſtyle is excellent; but where a man either does not, or will not underſtand the ſubject he writes on, there muſt always be a deficiency. In politics he was generally maſter of what he undertook, in morals never.

Mr. Addiſon for a happy and natural ſtyle will be always an honour to Britiſh literature. His diction indeed wants ſtrength, but it is equal to all the ſubjects he undertakes to handle, as he never (at leaſt in his finiſhed works) attempts any thing either in the argumentative or demonſtrative way.

Though Sir Richard Steele's reputation as a public writer was owing to his connexions with Mr. Addiſon, yet after their intimacy was formed Steele ſunk in his merit as an author. This was not owing ſo much to the evident ſuperiority on the part of Addiſon, as to the unnatural efforts which Steele made to equal or eclipſe him. This emulation de-

Digitized by Google

ſtroyed that genuine flow of diction which is diſcoverable in all his former compoſitions.

Whilſt their writings engaged attention and the favour of the public, reiterated but unſucceſsful endeavours were made towards forming a grammar of the Engliſh language. The authors of thoſe efforts went upon wrong principles. Inſtead of endeavouring to retrench the abſurdities of our language, and bringing it to a certain criterion, their grammars were no other than a collection of rules attempting to naturalize thoſe abſurdities, and bring them under a regular ſyſtem.

Somewhat effectual however might have been done towards fixing the ſtandard of the Engliſh language, had it not been for the ſpirit of party. For both whigs and tories being ambitious to ſtand at the head of ſo great a deſign, the Queen's death happened before any plan of an academy could be reſolved on.

Meanwhile the neceſſity of ſuch an inſtitution became every day more apparent. The periodical and political writers who then ſwarmed, adopted the very worſt manner of L'Eſtrange, till not only all decency, but all propriety of language, was loſt in the nation. Leſlie, a pert writer, with ſome wit and learning, inſulted the government every week with the groſſeſt abuſe. His ſtyle and manner, both of which were illiberal, was imitated by Ridpath, De Foe, Dunton, and others of the oppoſite party, and Toland pleaded the cauſe of atheiſm and immorality in much the ſame ſtrain; his ſubject ſeemed to debaſe his diction, and he ever failed moſt in one, when he grew moſt licentious in the other.

Towards the end of Queen Anne's reign, ſome of the greateſt men in England devoted their time to party, and then a much better manner obtained in political writing. Mr. Walpole, Mr. Addiſon, Mr.

Digitized by Google

Mr. Mainwaring, Mr. Steele, and many members of both houſes of parliament, drew their pens for the whigs; but they ſeem to have been over-matched, though not in argument yet in writing, by Bolingbroke, Prior, Swift, Arbuthnot, and the other friends of the oppoſite party. They, who oppoſe a miniſtry, have always a better field for ridicule and reproof than they who defend it.

Since that period our writers have either been encouraged above their merits or below them. Some who were poſſeſſed of the meaneſt abilities acquired the higheſt preferments, while others who ſeemed born to reflect a luſtre upon their age periſhed by want and neglect. More, Savage, and Amherſt, were poſſeſſed of great abilities, yet they were ſuffered to feel all the miſeries, that uſually attend the ingenious and the imprudent, that attend men of ſtrong paſſions, and no phlegmatic reſerve in their command.

At preſent, were a man to attempt to improve his fortune, or increaſe his friendſhip by poetry, he would ſoon feel the anxiety of diſappointment. The preſs lies open, and is a benefactor to every ſort of literature but that alone.

I am at a loſs whether to aſcribe this falling off of the public to a vicious taſte in the poet, or in them. Perhaps both are to be reprehended. The poet either drily didactive gives us rules, which might appear abſtruſe even in a ſyſtem of ethics, or triflingly volatile writes upon the moſt unworthy ſubjects; content, if he can give muſic inſtead of ſenſe; content, if he can paint to the imagination without any deſires or endeavours to affect; the publick therefore with juſtice diſcard ſuch empty ſound, which has nothing but a jingle, or, what is worſe, the unmuſical flow of blank verſe to recommend it. The late method alſo, into which our newſpapers have fallen, of

Digitized by Google

giving an epitome of every new publication, muſt greatly damp the writer's genius. He finds himſelf in this caſe at the mercy of men, who have neither abilities nor learning to diſtinguiſh his merit. He finds his own compoſition mixed with the ſordid traſh of every daily ſcribbler. There is a ſufficient ſpecimen given of his work to abate curioſity, and yet ſo mutilated as to render him contemptible. His firſt, and perhaps his ſecond work, by theſe means ſink, among the crudities of the age, into oblivion. Fame he finds begin to turn her back: he therefore flies to Profit which invites him, and he enrols himſelf in the liſts of Dulneſs and of Avarice for life.

Yet there are ſtill among us men of the greateſt abilities, and who in ſome parts of learning have ſurpaſſed their predeceſſors: Juſtice and Friendſhip might here impel me to ſpeak of names which will ſhine out to all poſterity, but Prudence reſtrains me from what I ſhould otherwiſe eagerly embrace. Envy might riſe againſt every honoured name I ſhould mention, ſince ſcarcely one of them has not thoſe who are his enemies, or thoſe who deſpiſe him, &c.

OF THE OPERA IN ENGLAND.

THE riſe and fall of our amuſements pretty much reſemble that of empire. They this day flouriſh without any viſible cauſe for ſuch vigour; the next they decay without any reaſon that can be aſſigned for their downfall. Some years ago the Italian opera was the only faſhionable amuſement among our nobility. The managers of the playhouſes dreaded it as a mortal enemy, and our very poets lifted themſelves

Digitized by Google

ſelves in the oppoſition; at preſent the houſe ſeems deſerted, the caſtrati ſing to empty benches, even Prince Vologeſe himſelf, a youth of great expectations, ſings himſelf out of breath, and rattles his chain to no purpoſe.

To ſay the truth, the opera, as it is conducted among us, is but a very humdrum amuſement; in other countries the decorations are entirely magnificent, the ſingers all excellent, and the burlettas or interludes quite entertaining; the beſt poets compoſe the words, and the beſt maſters the muſic, but with us it is otherwiſe; the decorations are but trifling and cheap; the ſingers, Matei only excepted, but indifferent. Inſtead of interlude, we have thoſe ſorts of ſkipping dances, which are calculated for the galleries of the theatre. Every performer ſings his favourite ſong, and the muſic is only a medley of old Italian airs, or ſome meagre modern Capricio.

When ſuch is the caſe, it is not much to be wondered if the opera is pretty much neglected; the lower orders of people have neither taſte nor fortune to reliſh ſuch an entertainment; they would find more ſatisfaction in the *Roaſt Beef of Old England* than in the fineſt cloſes of an eunuch, they ſleep amidſt all the agony of recitative: on the other hand people of fortune or taſte can hardly be pleaſed, where there is a viſible poverty in the decorations, and an entire want of taſte in the compoſition.

Would it not ſurpriſe one, that when Metaſtaſio is ſo well known in England, and ſo univerſally admired, the manager or the compoſer ſhould have recourſe to any other operas than thoſe written by him. I might venture to ſay, that *written by Metaſtaſio*, put up in the bills of the day, would alone be ſufficient to fill an houſe, ſince thus the admirers of ſenſe as well as ſound might find entertainment.

Digitized by Google

The performers alſo ſhould be entreated to ſing only their parts, without clapping in any of their own favourite airs. I muſt own, that ſuch ſongs are generally to me the moſt diſagreeable in the world. Every ſinger generally chooſes a favourite air, not from the excellency of the muſic, but from the difficulty; ſuch ſongs are generally choſen as ſurprize rather than pleaſe, where the performer may ſhow his compaſs, his breath, and his volubility.

Hence proceed thoſe unnatural ſtartings, thoſe unmuſical cloſings, and ſhakes lengthened out to a painful continuance; ſuch indeed may ſhew a voice, but it muſt give a truly delicate ear the utmoſt uneaſineſs. Such tricks are not muſic; neither Corelli nor Pergoleſi ever permitted them, and they begin even to be diſcontinued in Italy, where they firſt had their riſe.

And now I am upon the ſubject: our compoſers alſo ſhould affect greater ſimplicity; let their baſe cliff have all the variety they can give it; let the body of the muſic (if I may ſo expreſs it) be as various as they pleaſe, but let them avoid ornamenting a barren ground work; let them not attempt by flouriſhing to cheat us of ſolid harmony.

The works of Mr. Rameau are never heard without a ſurpriſing effect. I can attribute it only to this ſimplicity he every where obſerves, inſomuch that ſome of his fineſt harmonies are often only octave and uniſon. This ſimple manner has greater powers than is generally imagined; and were not ſuch a demonſtration miſplaced, I think from the princi les of muſic it might be proved to be moſt agreeable.

But to leave general reflection. With the preſent ſet of performers, the operas, if the conductor thinks proper, may be carried on with ſome ſucceſs, ſince they have all ſome merit; if not as actors, at leaſt

Digitized by Google

leaſt as ſingers. Signora Matei is at once both a perfect actreſs and a very fine ſinger. She is poſſeſſed of a fine ſenſibility in her manner, and ſeldom indulges thoſe extravagant and unmuſical flights of voice complained of before. Cornacini on the other hand is a very indifferent actor, has a moſt unmeaning face, ſeems not to feel his part, is infected with a paſſion of ſhowing his compaſs; but to recompenſe all theſe defects, his voice is melodious, he has vaſt compaſs and great volubility, his ſwell and ſhake are perfectly fine, unleſs that he continues the latter too long. In ſhort, whatever the defects of his action may be, they are amply recompenſed by his excellency as a ſinger; nor can I avoid fancying that he might make a much greater figure in an oratorio than upon the ſtage.

However, upon the whole, I know not whether ever operas can be kept up in England; they ſeem to be entirely exotic, and require the niceſt management and care. Inſtead of this, the care of them is aſſigned to men unacquainted with the genius and diſpoſition of the people they would amuſe, and whoſe only motives are immediate gain. Whether a diſcontinuance of ſuch entertainments would be more to the loſs or the advantage of the nation, I will not take upon me to determine, ſince it is as much our intereſt to induce foreigners of taſte among us on the one hand, as it is to diſcourage thoſe trifling members of ſociety, who generally compoſe the operatical *dramatis perſonæ*, on the other.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

ESSAYS,

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED

IN THE YEAR 1765.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

THE

PREFACE.

THE following Eſſays have already appeared at different times, and in different publications. The pamphlets in which they were inſerted being generally unſucceſsful, theſe ſhared the common fate, without aſſiſting the bookſeller's aims or extending the writer's reputation. The public were too ſtrenuouſly employed with their own follies, to be aſſiduous in eſtimating mine; ſo that many of my beſt attempts in this way have fallen victims to the tranſient topic of the times; the Ghoſt in Cock Lane, or the ſiege of Ticonderago.

But though they have paſt pretty ſilently into the world, I can by no means complain of their circulation. The magazines and papers of the day have indeed been liberal enough in this reſpect. Moſt of theſe eſſays have been regularly reprinted twice or thrice a year, and conveyed to the public through the kennel of ſome engaging compilation. If there be a pride in multiplied editions, I have ſeen ſome of my labours ſixteen times reprinted, and claimed by different parents as their own. I have ſeen them flouriſhed at the beginning with praiſe, and ſigned at the end with the names of Philantos, Philalethes, Philalutheros, and Philanthropos. Theſe gentlemen have kindly ſtood ſponſors to my productions, and to flatter me more have always paſſed them as their own.

It

Digitized by Google

It is time however at laſt to vindicate my claims; and as theſe entertainers of the public, as they call themſelves, have partly lived upon me for ſome years, let me now try if I cannot live a little upon myſelf. I would deſire in this caſe, to imitate that fat man whom I have ſomewhere heard of in a ſhipwreck, who, when the ſailors preſt by famine were taking ſlices from his poſteriors, to ſatisfy their hunger, inſiſted with great juſtice on having the firſt cut for himſelf.

Yet after all, I cannot be angry with any who have taken it into their heads, to think that whatever I write is worth reprinting, particularly when I conſider how great a majority will think it ſcarcely worth reading. Trifling and ſuperficial are terms of reproach that are eaſily objected, and that carry an air of penetration in the obſerver. Theſe faults have been objected to the following eſſays; and it muſt be owned in ſome meaſure that the charge is true. However, I could have made them more metaphyſical had I thought fit, but I would aſk whether in a ſhort eſſay it is not neceſſary to be ſuperficial? Before we have prepared to enter into the depths of a ſubject in the uſual forms, we have arrived at the bottom of our ſcanty page, and thus loſe the honours of a victory by too tedious a preparation for the combat.

There is another fault in this collection of trifles, which I fear will not be ſo eaſily pardoned. It will be alledged that the humour of them, (if any be found) is ſtale and hackneyed. This may be true enough as matters now ſtand, but I may with great truth aſſert, that the humour was new when I wrote it. Since that time indeed many of the topics, which were firſt ſtarted here, have been hunted down, and many of the thoughts blown upon. In fact theſe Eſſays were conſidered as quietly laid in the

Digitized by Google

the grave of oblivion; and our modern compilers, like ſextons and executioners, think it their undoubted right to pillage the dead.

However, whatever right I have to complain of the public, they can as yet have no juſt reaſon to complain of me. If I have written dull Eſſays, they have hitherto treated them as dull Eſſays. Thus far we are at leaſt upon par, and until they think fit to make me their humble debtor by praiſe, I am reſolved not to loſe a ſingle inch of my ſelf-importance. Inſtead, therefore, of attempting to eſtabliſh a credit amongſt them, it will perhaps be wiſer to apply to ſome more diſtant correſpondent, and as my drafts are in ſome danger of being proteſted at home, it may not be imprudent upon this occaſion to draw my bills upon Poſterity. Mr. Poſterity. Sir, nine hundred and ninety-nine years after ſight hereof, pay the bearer, or order, a thouſand pounds' worth of praiſe, free from all deductions whatſoever, it being a commodity that will then be very ſerviceable to him, and place it to the accompt of, &c.

ESSAY

Digitized by Google

ESSAY I.

I REMEMBER to have read in ſome philoſopher (I believe in Tom Brown's works) that, let a man's character, ſentiments, or complexion, be what they will, he can find company in London to match them. If he be ſplenetic, he may every day meet companions on the ſeats in St. James's Park, with whoſe groans he may mix his own, and pathetically talk of the weather. If he be paſſionate, he may vent his rage among the old orators at Slaughter's coffee-houſe, and damn the nation becauſe it keeps him from ſtarving. If he be phlegmatic, he may ſit in ſilence at the hum-drum club in Ivy-Lane; and if actually mad, he may find very good company in Moor-fields, either at Bedlam or the Foundery, ready to cultivate a nearer acquaintance.

But, although ſuch as have a knowledge of the town may eaſily claſs themſelves with tempers congenial to their own; a countryman who comes to live in London finds nothing more difficult. With regard to myſelf, none ever tried with more aſſiduity, or came off with ſuch indifferent ſucceſs. I ſpent a whole ſeaſon in the ſearch, during which time my name has been inrolled in ſocieties, lodges, convocations, and meetings without number. To ſome I was introduced by a friend, to others invited by an advertiſement; to theſe I introduced myſelf, and to thoſe I changed my name to gain admittance. In ſhort no coquette was ever more ſolicitous to match her ribbons to her complexion, than I to ſuit my club to my temper, for I was too obſtinate to bring my temper to conform to it.

The

Digitized by Google

The firſt club I entered upon coming to town, was that of the Choice Spirits. The name was entirely ſuited to my taſte; I was a lover of mirth, good-humour, and even ſometimes of fun, from my childhood.

As no other paſſport was requiſite but the payment of two ſhillings at the door, I introduced myſelf without farther ceremony to the members, who were already aſſembled, and had for ſome time begun upon buſineſs. The Grand, with a mallet in his hand, preſided at the head of the table. I could not avoid, upon my entrance, making uſe of all my ſkill in phyſiognomy, in order to diſcover that ſuperiority of genius in men, who had taken a title ſo ſuperior to the reſt of mankind. I expected to ſee the lines of every face marked with ſtrong thinking; but though I had ſome ſkill in this ſcience, I could for my life diſcover nothing but a pert ſimper, fat, or profound ſtupidity.

My ſpeculations were ſoon interrupted by the Grand, who had knocked down Mr. Spriggins for a ſong. I was upon this whiſpered by one of the company who ſat next me, that I ſhould now ſee ſomething touched off to a nicety, for Mr. Spriggins was going to give us Mad Tom in all its glory. Mr. Spriggins endeavoured to excuſe himſelf; for, as he was to act a madman and a king, it was impoſſible to go through the part properly without a crown and chains. His excuſes were over-ruled by a great majority, and with much vociferation. The preſident ordered up the jack-chain, and inſtead of a crown, our performer covered his brows with an inverted jordan. After he had rattled his chain, and ſhook his head, to the great delight of the whole company, he began his ſong. As I have heard few young fellows offer to ſing in company that did not expoſe themſelves, it was no great diſappointment

Digitized by Google

appointment to me to find Mr. Spriggins among the number; however not to ſeem an odd fiſh, I roſe from my ſeat in rapture, cried out, bravo! encore! and ſlapped the table as loud as any of the reſt.

The gentleman who ſat next me ſeemed highly pleaſed with my taſte and the ardour of my approbation; and whiſpering told me that I had ſuffered an immenſe loſs; for had I come a few minutes ſooner, I might have heard Gee ho Dobbin ſung in a tip-top manner by the pimple-noſed ſpirit at the preſident's right elbow: but he was evaporated before I came.

As I was expreſſing my uneaſineſs at this diſappointment, I found the attention of the company employed upon a fat figure, who, with a voice more rough than the Staffordſhire giant's, was giving us the Softly Sweet in Lydian Meaſure of Alexander's Feaſt. After a ſhort pauſe of admiration, to this ſucceeded a Welch dialogue with the humours of Teague and Taffy: after that came on Old Jackſon, with a ſtory between every ſtanza: next was ſung the Duſt-cart, and then Solomon's Song. The glaſs began now to circulate pretty freely; thoſe who were ſilent when ſober, would now be heard in their turn; every man had his ſong, and he ſaw no reaſon why he ſhould not be heard as well as any of the reſt: one begged to be heard while he gave Death and the Lady in high taſte; another ſung to a plate which he kept trundling on the edges; nothing was now heard but ſinging; voice roſe above voice, and the whole became one univerſal ſhout, when the landlord came to acquaint the company that the reckoning was drank out. Rabelais calls the moments in which a reckoning is mentioned, the moſt melancholy of our lives: never was ſo much noiſe ſo quickly quelled, as by this ſhort but pathetic oration of our landlord: drank out was echoed in

Digitized by Google

in a tone of diſcontent round the table: drank out already! that was very odd! that ſo much punch could be drank out already: impoſſible! The landlord however ſeeming reſolved not to retreat from his firſt aſſurances, the company was diſſolved, and a preſident choſen for the night enſuing.

A friend of mine, to whom I was complaining ſome time after of the entertainment I have been deſcribing, propoſed to bring me to the club that he frequented; which he fancied would ſuit the gravity of my temper exactly. "We have at the Muzzy "Club," ſays he, "no riotous mirth nor aukward "ribaldry; no confuſion or bawling; all is con-"ducted with wiſdom and decency: beſides ſome "of our members are worth forty thouſand pounds; "men of prudence and foreſight every one of them: "theſe are the proper acquaintance, and to ſuch "I will to-night introduce you." I was charmed at the propoſal: to be acquainted with men worth forty thouſand pounds, and to talk wiſdom the whole night, were offers that threw me into rapture.

At ſeven o'clock I was accordingly introduced by my friend, not indeed to the company; for though I made my beſt bow, they ſeemed inſenſible of my approach, but to the table at which they were ſitting. Upon my entering the room, I could not avoid feeling a ſecret veneration from the ſolemnity of the ſcene before me; the members kept a profound ſilence, each with a pipe in his mouth and a pewter pot in his hand, and with faces that might eaſily be conſtrued into abſolute wiſdom. Happy ſociety, thought I to myſelf, where the members think before they ſpeak, deliver nothing raſhly, but convey their thoughts to each other pregnant with meaning, and matured by reflection.

In this pleaſing ſpeculation I continued a full half hour, expecting each moment that ſome body would

Digitized by Google

begin to open his mouth; every time the pipe was laid down I expected it was to ſpeak; but it was only to ſpit. At length reſolving to break the charm myſelf, and overcome their extreme diffidence, for to this I imputed their ſilence; I rubbed my hands, and looking as wiſe as poſſible, obſerved that the nights began to grow a little cooliſh at this time of the year. This, as it was directed to none of the company in particular, none thought himſelf obliged to anſwer; wherefore I continued ſtill to rub my hands and look wiſe. My next effort was addreſſed to a gentleman who ſat next me; to whom I obſerved that the beer was extremely good: my neighbour made no reply, but by a large puff of tobacco-ſmoke.

I now began to be uneaſy in this dumb ſociety, till one of them a little relieved me by obſerving that bread had not riſen theſe three weeks: "Ay," ſays another, ſtill keeping the pipe in his mouth, "that puts me in mind of a pleaſant ſtory about "that—hem—very well; you muſt know—but, "before I begin—Sir, my ſervice to you—where "was I?"

My next club goes by the name of the Harmonical Society; probably from that love of order and friendſhip which every perſon commends in inſtitutions of this nature. The landlord was himſelf founder. The money ſpent is four pence each; and they ſometimes whip for a double reckoning. To this club few recommendations are requiſite, except the introductory four pence and my landlord's good word, which, as he gains by it, he never refuſes.

We all here talked and behaved as every body elſe uſually does on his club-night; we diſcuſſed the topic of the day, drank each others healths, ſnuffed the candles with our fingers, and filled our pipes from the ſame plate of tobacco. The company ſaluted each

Digitized by Google

each other in the common manner. Mr. Bellows-mender hoped Mr. Curry-comb-maker had not caught cold going home the laſt club-night; and he returned the compliment by hoping that young Maſter Bellows-mender had got well again of the chin-cough. Doctor Twiſt told us a ſtory of a parliament-man with whom he was intimately acquainted; while the bug-man, at the ſame time, was telling a better ſtory of a noble lord with whom he could do any thing. A gentleman in a black wig and leather breeches at the other end of the table was engaged in a long narrative of the Ghoſt in Cock-lane: he had read it in the papers of the day, and was telling it to ſome that ſat next him, who could not read. Near him Mr. Dibbins was diſputing on the old ſubject of religion with a Jew pedlar, over the table, while the preſident vainly knocked down Mr. Leatherſides for a ſong. Beſides the combinations of theſe voices, which I could hear altogether, and which formed an upper part to the concert, there were ſeveral others playing under-parts by themſelves, and endeavouring to faſten on ſome luckleſs neighbour's ear, who was himſelf bent upon the ſame deſign againſt ſome other.

We have often heard of the ſpeech of a corporation, and this induced me to tranſcribe a ſpeech of this club, taken in ſhort-hand, word for word, as it was ſpoken by every member of the company. It may be neceſſary to obſerve that the man who told of the ghoſt had the loudeſt voice, and the longeſt ſtory to tell, ſo that his continuing narrative filled every chaſm in the converſation.

"So, Sir, d'ye perceive me, the ghoſt giving three loud raps at the bed-poſt--Says my lord to me, my dear Smokeum, you know there is no man upon the face of the earth for whom I have ſo high—A damnable falſe heretical opinion of all ſound doc-

Digitized by Google

trine and good learning; for I'll tell it aloud, and ſpare not that—Silence for a ſong; Mr. Leatherſides for a ſong—"As I was a walking upon the highway, "I met a young damſel"—Then what brings you here? ſays the parſon to the ghoſt—Sanconiathan, Manetho, and Beroſus—The whole way from Iſlington-turnpike to Dog-houſe-bar—Dam—As for Abel Drugger, Sir, he's damn'd low in it; my 'prentice boy has more of the gentleman than he—For murder will out one time or another; and none but a ghoſt, you know, gentlemen, can—Damme if I don't; for my friend, whom you know, gentlemen, and who is a parliament-man, a man of conſequence, a dear honeſt creature, to be ſure; we were laughing laſt night at—Death and damnation upon all his poſterity by ſimply barely taſting—Sour grapes, as the fox ſaid once when he could not reach them; and I'll, I'll tell you a ſtory about that that will make you burſt your ſides with laughing: A fox once—Will nobody liſten to the ſong—"As I was "a walking upon the highway, I met a young "damſel both buxom and gay"—No ghoſt, gentlemen, can be murdered; nor did I ever hear but of one ghoſt killed in all my life, and that was ſtabbed in the belly with a—My blood and ſoul if I don't—Mr. Bellows-mender, I have the honour of drinking your very good health—Blaſt me if I do—dam—blood—bugs—fire—whizz—blid—tit—rat—trip"——The reſt all riot, nonſenſe, and rapid confuſion.

Were I to be angry at men for being fools, I could here find ample room for declamation; but alas! I have been a fool myſelf; and why ſhould I be angry with them for being ſomething ſo natural to every child of humanity?

Fatigued with this ſociety, I was introduced the following night to a club of faſhion. On taking my place I found the converſation ſufficiently eaſy, and

Digitized by Google

and tolerably good-natured; for my lord and Sir Paul were not yet arrived. I now thought myſelf completely fitted, and reſolving to ſeek no farther, determined to take up my reſidence here for the winter; while my temper began to open inſenſibly to the cheerfulneſs I ſaw diffuſed on every face in the room: but the deluſion ſoon vaniſhed, when the waiter came to apprize us that his lordſhip and Sir Paul were juſt arrived.

From this moment all our felicity was at an end; our new gueſts buſtled into the room, and took their ſeats at the head of the table. Adieu now all confidence; every creature ſtrove who ſhould moſt recommend himſelf to our members of diſtinction. Each ſeemed quite regardleſs of pleaſing any but our new gueſts; and what before wore the appearance of friendſhip, was now turned into rivalry.

Yet I could not obſerve that amidſt all this flattery and obſequious attention our great men took any notice of the reſt of the company. Their whole diſcourſe was addreſſed to each other. Sir Paul told his lordſhip a long ſtory of Moravia the Jew; and his lordſhip gave Sir Paul a very long account of his new method of managing ſilk-worms; he led him and conſequently the reſt of the company through all the ſtages of feeding, ſunning, and hatching; with an epiſode on mulberry-trees, a digreſſion upon graſs ſeeds, and a long parentheſis about his new poſtilion. In this manner we travelled on, wiſhing every ſtory to be the laſt; but all in vain.

"Hills over hills, and Alps on Alps aroſe."

The laſt club, in which I was inrolled a member, was a ſociety of moral philoſophers, as they called themſelves, who aſſembled twice a week, in order to ſhow the abſurdity of the preſent mode of religion, and eſtabliſh a new one in its ſtead.

Digitized by Google

I found the members very warmly diſputing when I arrived; not indeed about religion or ethics, but about who had neglected to lay down his preliminary ſix-pence upon entering the room. The preſident ſwore that he had laid his own down, and ſo ſwore all the company.

During this conteſt I had an opportunity of obſerving the laws, and alſo the members of the ſociety. The preſident who had been, as I was told, lately a bankrupt, was a tall pale figure with a long black wig; the next to him was dreſſed in a large white wig and a black cravat; a third by the brownneſs of his complexion ſeemed a native of Jamaica; and a fourth by his hue appeared to be a blackſmith. But their rules will give the moſt juſt idea of their learning and principles.

I. We being a laudable ſociety of moral philoſophers, intends to diſpute twice a week about religion and prieſtcraft. Leaving behind us old wives tales, and following good learning and ſound ſenſe: and if ſo be, that any other perſons has a mind to be of the ſociety, they ſhall be entitled ſo to do, upon paying the ſum of three ſhillings to be ſpent by the company in punch.

II. That no member get drunk before nine of the clock, upon pain of forfeiting three pence, to be ſpent by the company in punch.

III. That as members are ſometimes apt to go away without paying, every perſon ſhall pay ſix-pence upon his entering the room; and all diſputes ſhall be ſettled by a majority; and all fines ſhall be paid in punch.

IV. That ſix-pence ſhall be every night given to the preſident, in order to buy books of learning for the good of the ſociety; the preſident has already put himſelf to a good deal of expence in buying books for the club; particularly, the works of Tully, Socrates,

Digitized by Google

Socrates, and Cicero, which he will ſoon read to the ſociety.

V. All them who brings a new argument againſt religion, and who being a philoſopher, and a man of learning, as the reſt of us is, ſhall be admitted to the freedom of the ſociety, upon paying ſix-pence only, to be ſpent in punch.

VI. Whenever we are to have an extraordinary meeting, it ſhall be advertiſed by ſome outlandiſh name in the newspapers.

SAUNDERS MAC WILD, preſident,
ANTHONY BLEWIT, vice-preſident,
his ⊥ mark.
WILLIAM TURPIN, ſecretary.

ESSAY II.

WE eſſayiſts, who are allowed but one ſubject at a time, are by no means ſo fortunate as the writers of magazines, who write upon ſeveral. If a magaziner be dull upon the Spaniſh war, he ſoon has us up again with the ghoſt in Cock-lane; if the reader begins to doze upon that, he is quickly rouzed by an eaſtern tale; tales prepare us for poetry, and poetry for the meteorological hiſtory of the weather. It is the life and ſoul of a magazine never to be long dull upon one ſubject; and the reader, like the ſailor's horſe, has at leaſt the comfortable refreſhment of having the ſpur often changed.

As I ſee no reaſon why they ſhould carry off all the rewards of genius, I have ſome thoughts for the future of making this eſſay a magazine in miniature: I ſhall hop from ſubject to ſubject, and, if

Digitized by Google

properly encouraged, I intend in time to adorn my feuille volant with pictures. But to begin in the uſual form with

A Modeſt Addreſs to the Public.

The publick has been ſo often impoſed upon by the unperforming promiſes of others, that it is with the utmoſt modeſty, we aſſure them of our inviolable deſign of giving the very beſt collection that ever aſtoniſhed ſociety. The publick we honour and regard, and therefore to inſtruct and entertain them is our higheſt ambition, with labours calculated as well for the head as the heart. If four extraordinary pages of letter-preſs be any recommendation of our wit, we may at leaſt boaſt the honour of vindicating our own abilities. To ſay more in favour of the Infernal Magazine, would be unworthy the publick; to ſay leſs, would be injurious to ourſelves. As we have no intereſted motives for this undertaking, being a ſociety of gentlemen of diſtinction, we diſdain to eat or write like hirelings; we are all gentlemen reſolved to ſell our ſixpenny magazine merely for our own amuſement.

Be careful to aſk for the Infernal Magazine.

Dedication to that moſt ingenious of all Patrons the Tripoline Ambaſſador.

May it pleaſe your EXCELLENCY,

As your taſte in the fine arts is univerſally allowed and admired, permit the authors of the Infernal Magazine to lay the following ſheets humbly at your Excellency's toe; and ſhould our labours ever have the happineſs of one day adorning the courts of Fez, we doubt not that the influence wherewith we are honoured, ſhall be ever retained with the moſt warm ardour by,

May it pleaſe your Excellency,

Your moſt devoted humble ſervants,

The Authors of the INFERNAL MAGAZINE.

A Speech

Digitized by Google

A Speech ſpoken by the Indigent Philoſopher, to perſuade his Club at Cateaton to declare War againſt Spain.

My honeſt friends and brother politicians; I perceive that the intended war with Spain makes many of you uneaſy. Yeſterday, as we were told, the ſtocks roſe, and you were glad; to-day they fall, and you are again miſerable. But, my dear friends, what is the riſing or the falling of the ſtocks to us, who have no money? Let Nathan Ben Funk, the Dutch Jew, be glad or ſorry for this; but my good Mr. Bellows-mender, what is all this to you or me? You muſt mend broken bellows, and I write bad proſe, as long as we live, whether we like a Spaniſh war or not. Believe me, my honeſt friends, whatever you may talk of liberty and your own reaſon, both that liberty and reaſon are conditionally reſigned by every poor man in every ſociety; and, as we are born to work, ſo others are born to watch over us while we are working. In the name of common-ſenſe then, my good friends, let the great keep watch over us, and let us mind our buſineſs, and perhaps we may at laſt get money ourſelves, and ſet beggars at work in our turn. I have a Latin ſentence that is worth its weight in gold, and which I ſhall beg leave to tranſlate for your inſtruction. An author, called Lilly's Grammar, finely obſerves, that "Æs in præ-"ſenti perfectum format;" that is "Ready money "makes a perfect man;" Let us then get ready money; and let them that will ſpend theirs by going to war with Spain.

Rules for Behaviour drawn up by the Indigent Philoſopher.

If you be a rich man, you may enter the room with three loud hems, march deliberately up to the chimney,

Digitized by Google

chimney, and turn your back to the fire. If you be a poor man, I would adviſe you to ſhrink into the room as faſt as you can, and place yourſelf as uſual upon a corner of a chair in a remote corner.

When you are deſired to ſing in company, I would adviſe you to refuſe; for it is a thouſand to one, but that you torment us with affectation or a bad voice.

If you be young, and live with an old man, I would adviſe you not to like gravy; I was diſinherited myſelf for liking gravy.

Don't laugh much in public; the ſpectators that are not as merry as you, will hate you, either becauſe they envy your happineſs, or fancy themſelves the ſubject of your mirth.

Rules for raiſing the Devil. Tranſlated from the Latin of Danæus de Sortiariis, a Writer cotemporary with Calvin, and one of the Reformers of our Church.

The perſon who deſires to raiſe the Devil, is to ſacrifice a dog, a cat, and a hen, all of his own property, to Beelzebub. He is to ſwear an eternal obedience, and then to receive a mark in ſome unſeen place, either under the eye-lid, or in the roof of the mouth, inflicted by the devil himſelf. Upon this he has power given him over three ſpirits; one for earth, another for air, and a third for the ſea. Upon certain times the devil holds an aſſembly of magicians, in which each is to give an account of what evil he has done, and what he wiſhes to do. At this aſſembly he appears in the ſhape of an old man, or often like a goat with large horns. They upon this occaſion renew their vows of obedience; and then form a grand dance in honour of their falſe deity. The devil inſtructs them in every method of injuring mankind, in gathering poiſons, and of riding upon occaſion

Digitized by Google

ſion through the air. He ſhews them the whole method, upon examination, of giving evaſive anſwers; his ſpirits have power to aſſume the form of angels of light, and there is but one method of detecting them; viz. to aſk them in proper form, what method is the moſt certain to propagate the faith over all the world? To this they are not permitted by the Superior Power to make a falſe reply, nor are they willing to give the true one, wherefore they continue ſilent, and are thus detected.

ESSAY III.

WHERE Tauris lifts its head above the ſtorm, and preſents nothing to the ſight of the diſtant traveller but a proſpect of nodding rocks, falling torrents, and all the variety of tremendous Nature; on the bleak boſom of this frightful mountain, ſecluded from ſociety, and deteſting the ways of men, lived Aſem the Man-hater.

Aſem had ſpent his youth with men; had ſhared in their amuſements; and had been taught to love his fellow-creatures with the moſt ardent affection: but from the tenderneſs of his diſpoſition he exhauſted all his fortune in relieving the wants of the diſtreſſed. The petitioner never ſued in vain; the weary traveller never paſſed his door; he only deſiſted from doing good when he had no longer the power of relieving.

From a fortune thus ſpent in benevolence he expected a grateful return from thoſe he had formerly relieved; and made his application with confidence of redreſs: the ungrateful world ſoon grew weary of his

Digitized by Google

his importunity; for pity is but a ſhort-lived paſſion. He ſoon therefore began to view mankind in a very different light, from that in which he had before beheld them: he perceived a thouſand vices he had never before ſuſpected to exiſt: wherever he turned, ingratitude, diſſimulation, and treachery contributed to increaſe his deteſtation of them. Reſolved therefore to continue no longer in a world which he hated, and which repaid his deteſtation with contempt, he retired to this region of ſterility, in order to brood over his reſentment in ſolitude, and converſe with the only honeſt heart he knew; namely, with his own.

A cave was his only ſhelter from the inclemency of the weather; fruits gathered with difficulty from the mountain's ſide his only food; and his drink was fetched with danger and toil from the headlong torrent. In this manner he lived, ſequeſtered from ſociety, paſſing the hours in meditation, and ſometimes exulting that he was able to live independently of his fellow-creatures.

At the foot of the mountain an extenſive lake diſplayed its glaſſy boſom; reflecting on its broad ſurface the impending horrors of the mountain. To this capacious mirror he would ſometimes deſcend, and reclining on its ſteep banks, caſt an eager look on the ſmooth expanſe that lay before him. "How "beautiful," he often cried, "is Nature!" how "lovely even in her wildeſt ſcenes! How finely "contraſted is the level plain that lies beneath me, "with yon awful pile that hides its tremendous head "in clouds! But the beauty of theſe ſcenes is no "way comparable with their utility, hence an hun-"dred rivers are ſupplied, which diſtribute health "and verdure to the various countries through which "they flow. Every part of the univerſe is beauti-"ful, juſt, and wiſe, but man: vile man is a ſoleciſm

"in

Digitized by Google

" in nature; the only monſter in the creation. Tem-
" peſts and whirlwinds have their uſe; but vicious
" ungrateful man is a blot in the fair page of univer-
" ſal beauty. Why was I born of that deteſted ſpe-
" cies, whoſe vices are almoſt a reproach to the
" wiſdom of the divine Creator! Were men en-
" tirely free from vice, all would be uniformity,
" harmony, and order. A world of moral recti-
" tude ſhould be the reſult of a perfect moral
" agent. Why, why then, O Alla! muſt I be
" thus confined in darkneſs, doubt, and deſpair!"

Juſt as he uttered the word Deſpair, he was going to plunge into the lake beneath him, at once to ſatisfy his doubts, and put a period to his anxiety; when he perceived a moſt majeſtic being walking on the ſurface of the water, and approaching the bank on which he ſtood. So unexpected an object at once checked his purpoſe; he ſtopped, contemplated, and fancied he ſaw ſomething awful and divine in his aſpect.

" Son of Adam," cried the Genius, " ſtop thy
" raſh purpoſe; the Father of the Faithful has ſeen
" thy juſtice, thy integrity, thy miſeries, and hath
" ſent me to afford and adminiſter relief. Give
" me thine hand, and follow without trembling
" wherever I ſhall lead; in me behold the Genius of
" Conviction, kept by the Great Prophet, to turn
" from their errors thoſe who go aſtray, not from
" curioſity, but a rectitude of intention. Follow
" me, and be wiſe."

Aſem immediately deſcended upon the lake, and his guide conducted him along the ſurface of the water; till coming near the centre of the lake, they both began to ſink; the waters cloſed over their heads; they deſcended ſeveral hundred fathoms, till Aſem, juſt ready to give up his life as inevitably loſt, found himſelf with his celeſtial guide

Digitized by Google

in another world, at the bottom of the waters, where human foot had never trod before. His aſtoniſhment was beyond deſcription, when he ſaw a ſun like that he had left, a ſerene ſky over his head, and blooming verdure under his feet.

" I plainly perceive your amazement," ſaid the Genius; " but ſuſpend it for a while. This " world was formed by Alla, at the requeſt, and un- " der the inſpection, of our great Prophet; who " once entertained the ſame doubts which filled your " mind when I found you, and from the conſe- " quence of which you were ſo lately reſcued. The " rational inhabitants of this world are formed agree- " able to your own ideas; they are abſolutely with- " out vice. In other reſpects it reſembles your " earth, but differs from it in being wholly inhabited " by men who never do wrong. If you find this " world more agreeable than that you ſo lately left, " you have free permiſſion to ſpend the remainder " of your days in it; but permit me for ſometime to at- " tend you, that I may ſilence your doubts, and " make you better acquainted with your company " and your new habitation!"

" A world without vice! Rational beings with- " out immorality!" cried Aſem in a rapture; " I " thank thee, O Alla, who haſt at length heard my " petitions; this, this indeed will produce happi- " neſs, extacy, and eaſe. O for an immortality to " ſpend it among men who are incapable of ingra- " titude, injuſtice, fraud, violence, and a thouſand " other crimes, that render ſociety miſerable."

" Ceaſe thine acclamations," replied the Genius. " Look around thee; reflect on every object and " action before us, and communicate to me the re- " ſult of thine obſervations. Lead wherever you " think proper, I ſhall be your attendant and in- " ſtructor." Aſem and his companion travelled on

Digitized by Google

on in ſilence for ſome time, the former being entirely loſt in aſtoniſhment; but at laſt recovering his former ſerenity, he could not help obſerving, that the face of the country bore a near reſemblance to that he had left, except that this ſubterranean world ſtill ſeemed to retain its primæval wildneſs.

"Here," cried Aſem, "I perceive animals of "prey, and others that ſeem only deſigned for their "ſubſiſtence; it is the very ſame in the world over "our heads. But had I been permitted to inſtruct "our Prophet, I would have removed this defect, "and formed no voracious or deſtructive animals, "which only prey on the other parts of the crea-"tion." "Your tenderneſs for inferior animals is, I "find, remarkable," ſaid the Genius ſmiling. "But "with regard to meaner creatures this world ex-"actly reſembles the other; and indeed for obvi-"ous reaſons; for the earth can ſupport a more con-"ſiderable number of animals, by their thus be-"coming food for each other, than if they had lived "entirely on her vegetable productions. So that "animals of different natures thus formed, inſtead "of leſſening their multitude, ſubſiſt in the greateſt "number poſſible. But let us haſten on to the in-"habited country before us, and ſee what that of-"fers for inſtruction."

They ſoon gained the utmoſt verge of the foreſt, and entered the country inhabited by men without vice; and Aſem anticipated in idea the rational delight he hoped to experience in ſuch an innocent ſociety. But they had ſcarcely left the confines of the wood, when they beheld one of the inhabitants flying with haſty ſteps, and terror in his countenance, from an army of ſquirrels that cloſely purſued him. "Hea-"vens!" cried Aſem, "why does he fly? What "can he fear from animals ſo contemptible?" He had ſcarcely ſpoken when he perceived two dogs purſuing

Digitized by Google

purſuing another of the human ſpecies, who with equal terror and haſte attempted to avoid them. "This," cried Aſem to his guide, "is truly ſurpriſing; nor can I conceive the reaſon for ſo "ſtrange an action." "Every ſpecies of animals," replied the Genius, "has of late grown very powerful in this country; for the inhabitants at firſt "thinking it unjuſt to uſe either fraud or force in "deſtroying them, they have inſenſibly increaſed, "and now frequently ravage their harmleſs frontiers." "But they ſhould have been deſtroyed," cried Aſem; "you ſee the conſequence of ſuch neglect." "Where "is then that tenderneſs you ſo lately expreſſed "for ſubordinate animals?" replied the Genius ſmiling: "you ſeem to have forgot that branch of juſtice." "I muſt acknowledge my miſtake," returned Aſem; "I am now convinced that we muſt "be guilty of tyranny and injuſtice to the brute "creation, if we would enjoy the world ourſelves. "But let us no longer obſerve the duty of man to "theſe irrational creatures, but ſurvey their connections with one another."

As they walked farther up the country, the more he was ſurpriſed to ſee no veſtiges of handſome houſes, no cities, nor any mark of elegant deſign. His conductor perceiving his ſurprize, obſerved, That the inhabitants of this new world were perfectly content with their antient ſimplicity; each had an houſe, which, though homely, was ſufficient to lodge his little family; they were too good to build houſes, which could only increaſe their own pride, and the envy of the ſpectator; what they built was for convenience, and not for ſhow. "At leaſt, then," ſaid Aſem, "they have neither architects, painters, "nor ſtatuaries, in their ſociety; but theſe are idle "arts, and may be ſpared. However, before I "ſpend much more time, you ſhould have my "thanks

Digitized by Google

"thanks for introducing me into the ſociety of ſome "of their wiſeſt men: there is ſcarcely any pleaſure "to me equal to a refined converſation; there is "nothing of which I am ſo much enamoured as wiſ-"dom." "Wiſdom!" replied his inſtructor, "how "ridiculous! We have no wiſdom here, for we "have no occaſion for it; true wiſdom is only a "knowledge of our own duty, and the duty of others "to us; but of what uſe is ſuch wiſdom here, each "intuitively performs what is right in himſelf, and "expects the ſame from others? If by wiſdom "you ſhould mean vain curioſity, and empty ſpe-"culation, as ſuch pleaſures have their origin in va-"nity, luxury, or avarice, we are too good to pur-"ſue them." "All this may be right," ſays Aſem; "but methinks I obſerve a ſolitary diſpoſition pre-"vail among the people; each family keeps ſepa-"rately within their own precincts, without ſociety, "or without intercourſe." "That indeed is true," replied the other; "here is no eſtabliſhed ſociety; "nor ſhould there be any: all ſocieties are made "either through fear or friendſhip; the people we "are among are too good to fear each other; and "there are no motives to private friendſhip, where "all are equally meritorious." "Well then," ſaid the ſceptic, "as I am to ſpend my time here, if I "am to have neither the polite arts, nor wiſdom, "nor friendſhip, in ſuch a world, I ſhould be glad "at leaſt of an eaſy companion, who may tell me "his thoughts, and to whom I may communicate "mine." "And to what purpoſe ſhould either do "this?" ſays the Genius: "flattery or curioſity are "vicious motives, and never allowed of here; and "wiſdom is out of the queſtion."

"Still however," ſaid Aſem, "the inhabitants "muſt be happy; each is contented with his own "poſſeſſions, nor avariciouſly endeavours to heap

Digitized by Google

" up more than is neceſſary for his own ſubſiſtence; " each has therefore leiſure for pitying thoſe, that " ſtand in need of his compaſſion." He had ſcarcely ſpoken when his ears were aſſaulted with the lamentations of a wretch who ſat by the way-ſide, and in the moſt deplorable diſtreſs ſeemed gently to murmur at his own miſery. Aſem immeditaely ran to his relief, and found him in the laſt ſtage of a conſumption. " Strange," cied the ſon of Adam, that men " who are free from vice ſhould thus ſuffer ſo much " miſery without relief!" " Be not ſurprized," ſaid the wretch who was dying; " would it not be the ut- " moſt injuſtice for beings, who have only juſt ſuf- " ficient to ſupport themſelves, and are content with " a bare ſubſiſtence, to take it from their own mouths " to put it into mine? They never are poſſeſſed of " a ſingle meal more than is neceſſary; and what is " barely neceſſary cannot be diſpenſed with." " They " ſhould have been ſupplied with more than is neceſ- " ſary," cried Aſem; " and yet I contradict my " own opinion but a moment before: all is doubt, " perplexity, and confuſion. Even the want of in- " gratitude is no virtue here, ſince they never re- " ceived a favour. They have however another ex- " cellence yet behind; the love of their country is " ſtill I hope one of their darling virtues." " Peace, " Aſem," replied the Guardian, with a countenance not leſs ſevere than beautiful, " nor forfeit all thy " pretenſions to wiſdom; the ſame ſelfiſh motives, by " which we prefer our own intereſt to that of others, " induce us to regard our country preferably to that " of another. Nothing leſs than univerſal bene- " volence is free from vice, and that you ſee is prac- " tiſed here." " Strange!" cries the diſappointed pilgrim, in an agony of diſtreſs; " what ſort of a " world am I now introduced to? There is ſcarcely " a ſingle virtue, but that of temperance, which they " practiſe;

Digitized by Google

"practiſe; and in that they are no way ſuperior to "the very brute creation. There is ſcarcely an "amuſement which they enjoy; fortitude, libera- "lity, friendſhip, wiſdom, converſation, and love "of country, all are virtues entirely unknown "here; thus it ſeems that to be unacquainted with "vice is not to know virtue. Take me, O my Genius, "back to that very world which I have deſpiſed; "a world which has Alla for its contriver is much "more wiſely formed than that which has been pro- "jected by Mahomet. Ingratitude, contempt, and "hatred, I can now ſuffer, for perhaps I have de- "ſerved them. When I arraigned the wiſdom of "Providence, I only ſhowed my own ignorance; "henceforth let me keep from vice myſelf, and pity "it in others."

He had ſcarcely ended, when the Genius, aſſuming an air of terrible complacency, called all his thunders around him, and vaniſhed in a whirlwind. Aſem, aſtoniſhed at the terror of the ſcene, looked for his imaginary world; when, caſting his eyes around, he perceived himſelf in the very ſituation, and in the very place, where he firſt began to repine and deſpair; his right foot had been juſt advanced to take the fatal plunge, nor had it been yet withdrawn; ſo inſtantly did Providence ſtrike the ſeries of truths juſt imprinted on his ſoul. He now departed from the water-ſide in tranquillity, and leaving his horrid manſion travelled to Segeſtan, his native city; where he diligently applied himſelf to commerce, and put in practice that wiſdom he had learned in ſolitude. The frugality of a few years ſoon produced opulence; the number of his domeſtics increaſed; his friends came to him from every part of the city; nor did he receive them with diſdain: and a youth of miſery was concluded with an old age of elegance, affluence, and eaſe.

Digitized by Google

ESSAY IV.

IT is allowed on all hands, that our Engliſh divines receive a more liberal education, and improve that education by frequent ſtudy, more than any others of this reverend profeſſion in Europe. In general alſo it may be obſerved, that a greater degree of gentility is affixed to the character of a ſtudent in England than elſewhere; by which means our clergy have an opportunity of ſeeing better company while young, and of ſooner wearing off thoſe prejudices which they are apt to imbibe even in the beſt regulated univerſities, and which may be juſtly termed the vulgar errors of the wiſe.

Yet with all theſe advantages it is very obvious, that the clergy are no where ſo little thought of by the populace, as here; and though our divines are foremoſt with reſpect to abilities, yet they are found laſt in the effects of their miniſtry; the vulgar in general appearing no way impreſſed with a ſenſe of religious duty. I am not for whining at the depravity of the times, or for endeavouring to paint a proſpect more gloomy than in nature; but certain it is, no perſon who has travelled will contradict me, when I aver that the lower orders of mankind in other countries teſtify on every occaſion the profoundeſt awe of religion; while in England they are ſcarcely awakened into a ſenſe of its duties, even in circumſtances of the greateſt diſtreſs.

This diſſolute and fearleſs conduct foreigners are apt to attribute to climate and conſtitution; may not the vulgar, being pretty much neglected in our exhortations from the pulpit, be a conſpiring cauſe?

Our

Digitized by Google

Our divines ſeldom ſtoop to their mean capacities; and they who want inſtruction moſt, find leaſt in our religious aſſemblies.

Whatever may become of the higher orders of mankind, who are generally poſſeſſed of collateral motives to virtue, the vulgar ſhould be particularly regarded, whoſe behaviour in civil life is totally hinged upon their hopes and fears. Thoſe who conſtitute the baſis of the great fabrick of ſociety, ſhould be particularly regarded; for in policy, as in architecture, ruin is moſt fatal when it begins from the bottom.

Men of real ſenſe and underſtanding prefer a prudent mediocrity to a precarious popularity; and, fearing to outdo their duty, leave it half done. Their diſcourſes from the pulpit are generally dry, methodical and unaffecting; delivered with the moſt inſipid calmneſs; inſomuch, that, ſhould the peaceful preacher lift his head over the cuſhion, which alone he ſeems to addreſs, he might diſcover his audience, inſtead of being awakened to remorſe, actually ſleeping over his methodical and laboured compoſition.

This method of preaching is however by ſome called an addreſs to reaſon, and not to the paſſions; this is ſtyled the making of converts from conviction: but ſuch are indifferently acquainted with human nature, who are not ſenſible, that men ſeldom reaſon about their debaucheries till they are committed; reaſon is but a weak antagoniſt when headlong paſſion dictates; in all ſuch caſes we ſhould arm one paſſion againſt another; it is with the human mind as in nature, from the mixture of two oppoſites the reſultis moſt frequently neutral tranquillity. Thoſe, who attempt to reaſon us out of our follies, begin at the wrong end, ſince the attempt naturally preſup-

Digitized by Google

poſes us capable of reaſon; but to be made capable of this is one great point of the cure.

There are but few talents requiſite to become a popular preacher, for the people are eaſily pleaſed if they perceive any endeavours in the orator to pleaſe them; the meaneſt qualifications will work this effect, if the preacher ſincerely ſets about it. Perhaps little indeed very little more is required, than ſincerity and aſſurance; and a becoming ſincerity is always certain of producing a becoming aſſurance. "Si vis me flere, dolendum eſt primum tibi ipſi," is ſo trite a quotation, that it almoſt demands an apology to repeat it; yet, though all allow the juſtice of the remark, how few do we find put it in practice! our orators, with the moſt faulty baſhfulneſs, ſeem impreſſed rather with an awe of their audience than with a juſt reſpect for the truths they are about to deliver; they, of all profeſſions, ſeem the moſt baſhful, who have the greateſt right to glory in their commiſſion.

The French preachers generally aſſume all that dignity which becomes men who are ambaſſadors from Chriſt: the Engliſh divines, like erroneous envoys, ſeem more ſolicitous not to offend the court to which they are ſent, than to drive home the intereſts of their employer. The biſhop of Maſſillon, in the firſt ſermon he ever preached, found the whole audience, upon his getting into the pulpit, in a diſpoſition no way favourable to his intentions; their nods, whiſpers, or drowſy behaviour, ſhowed him that there was no great profit to be expected from his ſowing in a ſoil ſo improper; however, he ſoon changed the diſpoſition of his audience by his manner of beginning: "If," ſays he, "a cauſe, the "moſt important that could be conceived, were to "be tried at the bar before qualified judges; if this "cauſe intereſted ourſelves in particular; if the eyes "of

Digitized by Google

" of the whole kingdom were fixed upon the event;
" if the moſt eminent council were employed on
" both ſides; and if we had heard from our infancy
" of this yet undetermined trial; would you not all
" ſit with due attention, and warm expectation, to
" the pleadings on each ſide? Would not all your
" hopes and fears be hinged upon the final deciſion?
" And yet, let me tell you, you have this moment
" a cauſe of much greater importance before you;
" a cauſe where not one nation, but all the world,
" are ſpectators; tried not before a fallible tribunal,
" but the awful throne of Heaven, where not your
" temporal and tranſitory intereſts are the ſubject
" of debate, but your eternal happineſs or miſery,
" where the cauſe is ſtill undetermined; but per-
" haps, the very moment I am ſpeaking may fix
" the irrevocable decree that ſhall laſt for ever; and
" yet, notwithſtanding all this, you can hardly ſit
" with patience to hear the tidings of your own ſal-
" vation; I plead the cauſe of Heaven, and yet I
" am ſcarcely attended to, &c."

The ſtyle, the abruptneſs of a beginning like this, in the cloſet would appear abſurd; but in the pulpit it is attended with the moſt laſting impreſſions: that ſtyle, which in the cloſet might juſtly be called flimſy, ſeems the true mode of eloquence here. I never read a fine compoſition, under the title of a ſermon, that I do not think the author has miſcalled his piece; for the talents to be uſed in writing well, entirely differ from thoſe of ſpeaking well. The qualifications for ſpeaking, as has been already obſerved, are eaſily acquired; they are accompliſhments which may be taken up by every candidate who will be at the pains of ſtooping. Impreſſed with a ſenſe of the truths he is about to deliver, a preacher diſregards the applauſe or the contempt of his audience, and he inſenſibly aſſumes a juſt and manly

Digitized by Google

ſincerity. With this talent alone we ſee what crowds are drawn around enthuſiaſts, even deſtitute of common ſenſe; what numbers converted to Chriſtianity. Folly may ſometimes ſet an example for wiſdom to practiſe; and our regular divines may borrow inſtruction from even methodiſts, who go their circuits and preach prizes among the populace. Even Whitfield may be placed as a model to ſome of our young divines; let them join to their own good ſenſe his earneſt manner of delivery.

It will be perhaps objected, that by confining the excellencies of a preacher to proper aſſurance, earneſtneſs, and openneſs of ſtyle, I make the qualifications too trifling for eſtimation: there will be ſomething called oratory brought up on this occaſion; action, attitude, grace, elocution, may be repeated as abſolutely neceſſary to compleat the character; but let us not be deceived; common-ſenſe is ſeldom ſwayed by fine tones, muſical periods, juſt attitudes, or the diſplay of a white handkerchief; oratorial behaviour, except in very able hands indeed, generally ſinks into aukward and paltry affectation.

It muſt be obſerved, however, that theſe rules are calculated only for him who would inſtruct the vulgar, who ſtand in moſt need of inſtruction; to addreſs philoſophers, and to obtain the character of a polite preacher among the polite—a much more uſeleſs, though more ſought for character—requires a different method of proceeding. All I ſhall obſerve on this head is, to entreat the polemic divine, in his controverſy with the Deiſts, to act rather offenſively than to defend; to puſh home the grounds of his belief, and the impracticability of theirs, rather than to ſpend time in ſolving the objections of every opponent. "It is ten to one," ſays a late writer on the art of war, "but that the aſſailant, "who

Digitized by Google

"who attacks the enemy in his trenches, is always "victorious."

Yet, upon the whole, our clergy might employ themſelves more to the benefit of ſociety, by declining all controverſy, than by exhibiting even the profoundeſt ſkill in polemic diſputes; their conteſts with each other often turn on ſpeculative trifles; and their diſputes with the Deiſts are almoſt at an end, ſince they can have no more than victory, and that they are already poſſeſſed of, as their antagoniſts have been driven into a confeſſion of the neceſſity of revelation, or an open avowal of atheiſm. To continue the diſpute longer would only endanger it; the ſceptic is ever expert at puzzling a debate which he finds himſelf unable to continue; "and, like an olympic "boxer, generally fights beſt when undermoſt."

ESSAY V.

THE improvements we make in mental acquirements only render us each day more ſenſible of the defects of our conſtitution: with this in view, therefore, let us often recur to the amuſements of youth; endeavour to forget age and wiſdom, and as far as innocence goes, be as much a boy as the beſt of them.

Let idle declaimers mourn over the degeneracy of the age; but in my opinion every age is the ſame. This I am ſure of, that man in every ſeaſon is a poor fretful being, with no other means to eſcape the calamities of the times but by endeavouring to forget them; for if he attempts to reſiſt, he is certainly undone. If I feel poverty and pain, I am not ſo

Digitized by Google

ſo hardy as to quarrel with the executioner, even while under correction: I find myſelf no way diſpoſed to make fine ſpeeches, while I am making wry faces. In a word, let me drink when the fit is on, to make me inſenſible; and drink when it is over, for joy that I feel pain no longer.

The character of old Falſtaff, even with all his faults, gives me more conſolation than the moſt ſtudied efforts of wiſdom: I here behold an agreeable old fellow, forgetting age, and ſhowing me the way to be young at ſixty-five. Sure I am well able to be as merry, though not ſo comical as he—Is it not in my power to have, though not ſo much wit, at leaſt as much vivacity?—Age, care, wiſdom, reflection, be gone—I give you to the winds. Let's have t'other bottle: here's to the memory of Shakſpeare, Falſtaff, and all the merry men of Eaſtcheap.

Such were the reflections that naturally aroſe while I ſat at the Boar's head tavern, ſtill kept at Eaſtcheap. Here by a pleaſant fire, in the very room where old Sir John Falſtaff cracked his jokes, in the very chair which was ſometimes honoured by prince Henry, and ſometimes polluted by his immoral merry companions, I ſat and ruminated on the follies of youth; wiſhed to be young again; but was reſolved to make the beſt of life while it laſted, and now and then compared paſt and preſent times together. I conſidered myſelf as the only living repreſentative of the old knight, and tranſported my imagination back to the times when the prince and he gave life to the revel, and made even debauchery not diſguſting. The room alſo conſpired to throw my reflections back into antiquity: the oak floor, the Gothic windows, and the ponderous chimney-piece, had long withſtood the tooth of time; the watchman had gone twelve; my companions had all ſtolen off; and none now remained with me but the landlord,

Digitized by Google

landlord. From him I could have wiſhed to know the hiſtory of a tavern, that had ſuch a long ſucceſſion of cuſtomers: I could not help thinking that an account of this kind would be a pleaſing contraſt of the manners of different ages; but my landlord could give me no information. He continued to doze and ſot, and tell a tedious ſtory, as moſt other landlords uſually do; and, though he ſaid nothing, yet was never ſilent: one good joke followed another good joke; and the beſt joke of all was generally begun towards the end of a bottle. I found at laſt, however, his wine and his converſation operate by degrees: he inſenſibly began to alter his appearance. His cravat ſeemed quilled into a ruff, and his breeches ſwelled out into a fardingale. I now fancied him changing ſexes; and as my eyes began to cloſe in ſlumber, I imagined my fat landlord actually converted into as fat a landlady. However, ſleep made but few changes in my ſituation: the tavern, the apartment, and the table, continued as before; nothing ſuffered mutation but my hoſt, who was fairly altered into a gentlewoman, whom I knew to be dame Quickly, miſtreſs of this tavern in the days of Sir John; and the liquor we were drinking, which ſeeemed converted into ſack and ſugar.

"My dear Mrs. Quickly," cried I (for I knew her perfectly well at firſt ſight) "I am heartily glad "to ſee you. How have you left Falſtaff, Piſ-"tol, and the reſt of our friends below ſtairs? "Brave and hearty, I hope?" In good ſooth, replied ſhe, he did deſerve to live for ever; but he maketh foul work on't where he hath flitted. Queen Proſerpine and he have quarrelled for his attempting a rape upon her divinity; and were it not that ſhe ſtill had bowels of compaſſion, it more than ſeems probable he might have been now ſprawling in Tartarus.

I now

Digitized by Google

I now found that ſpirits ſtill preſerve the frailties of the fleſh; and that, according to the laws of criticiſm and dreaming, ghoſts have been known to be guilty of even more than platonic affection: wherefore, as I found her too much moved on ſuch a topic to proceed, I was reſolved to change the ſubject; and deſiring ſhe would pledge me in a bumper, obſerved with a ſigh, that our ſack was nothing now to what it was in former days: "Ah, Mrs. Quickly, "thoſe were merry times when you drew ſack for "prince Henry: men were twice as ſtrong, and "twice as wiſe, and much braver, and ten thou-"ſand times more charitable than now. Thoſe "were the times! The battle of Agincourt was a "victory indeed! Ever ſince that we have only "been degenerating; and I have lived to ſee "the day when drinking is no longer faſhionable. "When men wear clean ſhirts, and women ſhow "their necks and arms, all are degenerated, Mrs. "Quickly; and we ſhall probably, in another cen-"tury, be frittered away into beaus or monkeys. "Had you been on earth to ſee what I have ſeen, "it would congeal all the blood in your body (your "ſoul, I mean.) Why, our very nobility now "have the intolerable arrogance, in ſpite of what is "every day remonſtrated from the preſs; our very "nobility, I ſay, have the aſſurance to frequent aſ-"ſemblies, and preſume to be as merry as the vul-"gar. See, my very friends have ſcarcely manhood "enough to ſit to it till eleven; and I only am left "to make a night on't. Pr'ythee do me the favour "to conſole me a little for their abſence by the ſtory "of your own adventure, or the hiſtory of the ta-"vern where we are now ſitting: I fancy the nar-"rative may have ſomething ſingular."

Obſerve this apartment, interrupted my companion; of neat device and excellent workmanſhip—

In

Digitized by Google

In this room I have lived, child, woman, and ghoſt, more than three hundred years: I am ordered by Pluto to keep an annual regiſter of every tranſaction that paſſeth here; and I have whilhom compiled three hundred tomes, which eftſoons may be ſubmitted to thy regards. "None of your whilhoms or eft-"ſoons's, Mrs. Quickly, if you pleaſe," I replied: "I know you can talk every whit as well as I can; "for, as you have lived here ſo long, it is but natu-"ral to ſuppoſe you ſhould learn the converſation of "the company. Believe me, dame, at beſt, you "have neither too much ſenſe, or too much lan-"guage to ſpare; ſo give me both as well as you "can: but firſt my ſervice to you: old women "ſhould water their clay a little now and then; and "now to your ſtory."

The ſtory of my own adventures, replied the viſion, is but ſhort and unſatisfactory; for believe me, Mr. Rigmarole, believe me, a woman with a but of ſack at her elbow, is never long-lived. Sir John's death afflicted me to ſuch a degree, that I ſincerely believe, to drown ſorrow, I drank more liquor myſelf than I drew for my cuſtomers: my grief was ſincere, and the ſack was excellent. The prior of a neighbouring convent (for our priors then had as much power as a Middleſex juſtice now) he, I ſay, it was who gave me a licence for keeping a diſorderly houſe; upon conditions I ſhould never make hard bargains with the clergy, that he ſhould have a bottle of ſack every morning, and the liberty of confeſſing which of my girls he thought proper in private every night. I had continued for ſeveral years to pay this tribute; and he, it muſt be confeſſed, continued as rigorouſly to exact it. I grew old inſenſibly; my cuſtomers continued, however, to compliment my looks while I was by, but I could hear them ſay I was wearing when my back was turned. The prior however

Digitized by Google

however ſtill was conſtant, and ſo were half his convent: but one fatal morning he miſſed the uſual beverage; for I had incautiouſly drank over-night the laſt bottle myſelf. What will you have on't?—The very next day Doll Tearſheet and I were ſent to the houſe of correction, and accuſed of keeping a low bawdy-houſe. In ſhort, we were ſo well purified there with ſtripes, mortification and penance, that we were afterwards utterly unfit for worldly converſation: though ſack would have killed me, had I ſtuck to it; yet I ſoon died for want of a drop of ſomething comfortable, and fairly left my body to the care of the beadle.

Such is my own hiſtory; but that of the tavern, where I have ever ſince been ſtationed, affords greater variety. In the hiſtory of this, which is one of the oldeſt in London, you may view the different manners, pleaſures, and follies, of men at different periods. You will find mankind neither better nor worſe now than formerly: the vices of an uncivilized people are generally more deteſtable, though not ſo frequent, as thoſe in polite ſociety. It is the ſame luxury, which formerly ſtuffed your alderman with plumb-porridge, and now crams him with turtle. It is the ſame low ambition, that formerly induced a courtier to give up his religion to pleaſe his king, and now perſuades him to give up his conſcience to pleaſe his miniſter. It is the ſame vanity, that formerly ſtained our ladies cheeks and necks with woad, and now paints them with carmine. Your antient Briton formerly powdered his hair with red earth, like brick-duſt, in order to appear frightful: your modern Briton cuts his hair on the crown, and plaiſters it with hogs-lard and flour; and this to make him look killing. It is the ſame vanity, the ſame folly, and the ſame vice, only appearing different, as viewed through the glaſs of faſhion. In a word, all mankind are a—

"Sure

Digitized by Google

"Sure the woman is dreaming," interrupted I. "None of your reflections, Mrs. Quickly, if you "love me; they only give me the ſpleen. Tell me "your hiſtory at once. I love ſtories, but hate "reaſoning."

If you pleaſe then, ſir, returned my companion, I'll read you an abſtract, which I made of the three hundred volumes I mentioned juſt now.

My body was no ſooner laid in the duſt, than the prior and ſeveral of his convent came to purify the tavern from the pollutions with which they ſaid I had filled it. Maſſes were ſaid in every room, reliques were expoſed upon every piece of furniture, and the whole houſe waſhed with a deluge of holy-water. My habitation was ſoon converted into a monaſtery; inſtead of cuſtomers now applying for ſack and ſugar, my rooms were crowded with images, reliques, ſaints, whores, and friars. Inſtead of being a ſcene of occaſional debauchery, it was now filled with continual lewdneſs. The prior led the faſhion, and the whole convent imitated his pious example. Matrons came hither to confeſs their ſins, and to commit new. Virgins came hither who ſeldom went virgins away. Nor was this a convent peculiarly wicked; every convent at that period was equally fond of pleaſure, and gave a boundleſs looſe to appetite. The laws allowed it; each prieſt had a right to a favourite companion, and a power of diſcarding her as often as he pleaſed. The laity grumbled, quarrelled with their wives and daughters, hated their confeſſors, and maintained them in opulence and eaſe. Theſe, theſe were happy times, Mr. Rigmarole; theſe were times of piety, bravery, and ſimplicity!

"Not ſo very happy neither, good madam; pretty "much like the preſent; thoſe that labour ſtarve; "and thoſe that do nothing wear fine cloaths and "live in luxury."

In

Digitized by Google

In this manner the fathers lived for ſome years without moleſtation; they tranſgreſſed, confeſſed themſelves to each other, and were forgiven. One evening, however, our prior keeping a lady of diſtinction ſomewhat too long at confeſſion, her huſband unexpectedly came upon them, and teſtified all the indignation which was natural upon ſuch an occaſion. The prior aſſured the gentleman that it was the devil who put it into his heart; and the lady was very certain, that ſhe was under the influence of magic, or ſhe could never have behaved in ſo unfaithful a manner. The huſband, however, was not to be put off by ſuch evaſions, but ſummoned both before the tribunal of juſtice. His proofs were flagrant, and he expected large damages. Such indeed he had a right to expect, were the tribunals of thoſe days conſtituted in the ſame manner as they are now. The cauſe of the prieſt was to be tried before an aſſembly of prieſts; and a layman was to expect redreſs only from their impartiality and candour. What plea then do you think the prior made to obviate this accuſation? He denied the fact, and challenged the plaintiff to try the merits of their cauſe by ſingle combat. It was a little hard, you may be ſure, upon the poor gentleman, not only to be made a cuckold, but to be obliged to fight a duel into the bargain; yet ſuch was the juſtice of the times. The prior threw down his glove, and the injured huſband was obliged to take it up, in token of his accepting the challenge. Upon this the prieſt ſupplied his champion, for it was not lawful for the clergy to fight; and the defendant and plaintiff, according to cuſtom, were put in priſon; both ordered to faſt and pray, every method being previouſly uſed to induce both to a confeſſion of the truth. After a month's impriſonment, the hair of each was cut, the bodies anointed with oil, the field of

Digitized by Google

of battle appointed and guarded by ſoldiers, while his majeſty preſided over the whole in perſon. Both the champions were ſworn not to ſeek victory either by fraud or magic. They prayed and confeſſed upon their knees; and after theſe ceremonies the reſt was left to the courage and conduct of the combatants. As the champion whom the prior had pitched upon had fought ſix or eight times upon ſimilar occaſions, it was no way extraordinary to find him victorious in the preſent combat. In ſhort the huſband was diſcomfited; he was taken from the field of battle, ſtripped to his ſhirt, and after one of his legs had been cut off, as juſtice ordained in ſuch caſes, he was hanged as a terror to future offenders. Theſe, theſe were the times, Mr. Rigmarole; you ſee how much more juſt, and wiſe, and valiant, our anceſtors were than us. "I rather fancy, madam, "that the times then were pretty much like our "own; where a multiplicity of laws gives a judge as "much power as a want of law; ſince he is ever "ſure to find among the number ſome to counte-"nance his partiality."

Our convent, victorious over their enemies, now gave a looſe to every demonſtration of joy. The lady became a nun, the prior was made a biſhop, and three Wickliffites were burned in the illuminations and fire-works, that were made on the preſent occaſion. Our convent now began to enjoy a very high degree of reputation. There was not one in London that had the character of hating heretics ſo much as ours. Ladies of the firſt diſtinction choſe from our convent their confeſſors; in ſhort it flouriſhed, and might have flouriſhed to this hour, but for a fatal accident which terminated in its overthrow. The lady, whom the prior had placed in a nunnery, and whom he continued to viſit for ſome time with great punctuality, began at laſt to perceive that ſhe was quite forſaken.

Digitized by Google

Secluded from converſation, as uſual, ſhe now entertained the viſions of a devotee; found herſelf ſtangely diſturbed; but heſitated in determining, whether ſhe was poſſeſſed by an angel or a dæmon. She was not long in ſuſpence; for upon vomiting a large quantity of crooked pins, and finding the palms of her hands turned outwards, ſhe quickly concluded that ſhe was poſſeſſed by the devil. She ſoon loſt entirely the uſe of ſpeech; and, when ſhe ſeemed to ſpeak, every body that was preſent perceived that her voice was not her own, but that of the devil within her. In ſhort ſhe was bewitched; and all the difficulty lay in determining who it could be that bewitched her. The nuns and the monks all demanded the magician's name, but the devil made no reply; for he knew they had no authority to aſk queſtions. By the rules of witchcraft, when an evil ſpirit has taken poſſeſſion, he may refuſe to anſwer any queſtions aſked him, unleſs they are put by a biſhop, and to theſe he is obliged to reply. A biſhop therefore was ſent for, and now the whole ſecret came out: the devil reluctantly owned that he was a ſervant of the prior; that by his command he reſided in his preſent habitation, and that without his command he was reſolved to keep in poſſeſſion. The biſhop was an able exorciſt; he drove the devil out by force of myſtical arms; the prior was arraigned for witchcraft; the witneſſes were ſtrong and numerous againſt him, not leſs than fourteen perſons being by, who heard the devil talk Latin. There was no reſiſting ſuch a cloud of witneſſes; the prior was condemned; and he who had aſſiſted at ſo many burnings, was burned himſelf in turn. Theſe were times, Mr. Rigmarole; the people of thoſe times were not infidels, as now, but ſincere believers! "Equally faulty with ourſelves; "they believed what the devil was pleaſed to tell "them;

Digitized by Google

"them; and we ſeem reſolved at laſt to believe "neither God nor devil."

After ſuch a ſtain upon the convent, it was not to be ſuppoſed it could ſubſiſt any longer; the fathers were ordered to decamp, and the houſe was once again converted into a tavern. The king conferred it on one of his caſt miſtreſſes; ſhe was conſtituted landlady by royal authority; and as the tavern was in the neighbourhood of the court, and the miſtreſs a very polite woman, it began to have more buſineſs than ever, and ſometimes took not leſs than four ſhillings a day.

But perhaps you are deſirous of knowing what were the peculiar qualifications of a woman of faſhion at that period; and in a deſcription of the preſent landlady, you will have a tolerable idea of all the reſt. This lady was the daughter of a nobleman, and received ſuch an education in the country as became her quality, beauty, and great expectations. She could make ſhifts and hoſe for herſelf and all the ſervants of the family, when ſhe was twelve years old. She knew the names of the four and twenty letters, ſo that it was impoſſible to bewitch her; and this was a greater piece of learning than any lady in the whole country could pretend to. She was always up early, and ſaw breakfaſt ſerved in the great hall by ſix o'clock. At this ſcene of feſtivity ſhe generally improved good-humour, by telling her dreams, relating ſtories of ſpirits, ſeveral of which ſhe herſelf had ſeen; and one of which ſhe was reported to have killed with a black-haſted knife. Hence ſhe uſually went to make paſtry in the larder, and here ſhe was followed by her ſweet-hearts, who were much helped on in converſation by ſtruggling with her for kiſſes. About ten miſs generally went to play at hot-cockles and blindman's buff in the parlour; and when the young folks (for they ſeldom played at hot-cockles when grown old) were tired of

Digitized by Google

ſuch amuſements, the gentlemen entertained miſs with the hiſtory of their greyhounds, bear-baitings, and victories at cudgel-playing. If the weather was fine, they ran at the ring, ſhot at butts; while miſs held in her hand a ribbon, with which ſhe adorned the conqueror. Her mental qualifications were exactly fitted to her external accompliſhments. Before ſhe was fifteen ſhe could tell the ſtory of Jack the Giant Killer, could name every mountain that was inhabited by fairies, knew a witch at firſt ſight, and could repeat four Latin prayers without a prompter. Her dreſs was perfectly faſhionable; her arms and her hair were completely covered; a monſtrous ruff was put round her neck; ſo that her head ſeemed like that of John the Babtiſt placed in a charger. In ſhort when completely equipped her appearance was ſo very modeſt, that ſhe diſcovered little more than her noſe. Theſe were the times, Mr. Rigmarole; when every lady that had a good noſe might ſet up for a beauty; when every woman that could tell ſtories, might be cried up for a wit. "I "am as much diſpleaſed at thoſe dreſſes which con-"ceal too much, as at thoſe which diſcover too "much: I am equally an enemy to a female dunce "or a female pedant."

You may be ſure that miſs choſe a huſband with qualifications reſembling her own; ſhe pitched upon a courtier, equally remarkable for hunting and drinking, who had given ſeveral proofs of his great virility among the daughters of his tenants and domeſtics. They fell in love at firſt ſight (for ſuch was the gallantry of the times) were married, came to court, and madam appeared with ſuperior qualifications. The king was ſtruck with her beauty. All property was at the king's command; the huſband was obliged to reſign all pretenſions in his wife to the ſovereign, whom God had anointed to commit adultery where he

Digitized by Google

he thought proper. The king loved her for ſome time; but at length repenting of his miſdeeds, and inſtigated by his father-confeſſor, from a principle of conſcience removed her from his levee to the bar of this tavern, and took a new miſtreſs in her ſtead. Let it not ſurprize you to behold the miſtreſs of a king degraded to ſo humble an office. As the ladies had no mental accompliſhments, a good face was enough to raiſe them to the royal couch; and ſhe, who was this day a royal miſtreſs, might the next, when her beauty palled upon enjoyment, be doomed to infamy and want.

Under the care of this lady the tavern grew into great reputation; the courtiers had not yet learned to game, but they paid it off by drinking; drunkenneſs is ever the vice of a barbarous, and gaming of a luxurious age. They had not ſuch frequent entertainments as the moderns have, but were more expenſive and more luxurious in thoſe they had. All their fooleries were more elaborate, and more admired by the great and the vulgar than now. A courtier has been known to ſpend his whole fortune at a ſingle feaſt, a king to mortgage his dominions to furniſh out the frippery of a tournament. There were certain days appointed for riot and debauchery, and to be ſober at ſuch times was reputed a crime. Kings themſelves ſet the example; and I have ſeen monarchs in this room drunk before the entertainment was half concluded. Theſe were the times, Sir, when kings kept miſtreſſes, and got drunk in public; they were too plain and ſimple in thoſe happy times to hide their vices, and act the hypocrite, as now. "Lord! Mrs. Quickly," interrupting her, "I "expected to have heard a ſtory, and here you are go-"ing to tell me I know not what of times and vices; "pr'ythee let me intreat thee once more to wave re-"flections, and give thy hiſtory without deviation."

Digitized by Google

No lady upon earth, continued my viſionary correſpondent, knew how to put off her damaged wine or women with more art than ſhe. When theſe grew flat, or thoſe paltry, it was but changing the names; the wine became excellent, and the girls agreeable. She was alſo poſſeſſed of the engaging leer, the chuck under the chin, winked at a double-entendre, could nick the opportunity of calling for ſomething comfortable, and perfectly underſtood the diſcreet moments when to withdraw. The gallants of theſe times pretty much reſembled the bloods of ours; they were fond of pleaſure, but quite ignorant of the art of refining upon it: thus a court-bawd of thoſe times reſembled the common low-lived harridan of a modern bagnio. Witneſs, ye powers of debauchery, how often I have been preſent at the various appearances of drunkenneſs, riot, guilt, and brutality! A tavern is the true picture of human infirmity; in hiſtory we find only one ſide of the age exhibited to our view; but in the accounts of a tavern we ſee every age equally abſurd and equally vicious.

Upon this lady's deceaſe the tavern was ſucceſſively occupied by adventurers, bullies, pimps, and gameſters. Towards the concluſion of the reign of Henry VII. gaming was more univerſally practiſed in England than even now. Kings themſelves have been know to play off at Primero, not only all the money and jewels they could part with, but the very images in churches. The laſt Henry played away, in this very room, not only the four great bells of St. Paul's cathedral, but the fine image of St. Paul, which ſtood upon the top of the ſpire, to Sir Miles Partridge, who took them down the next day, and ſold them by auction. Have you then any cauſe to regret being born in the times you now live? or do you ſtill believe that human nature continues to run on declining every age? If we obſerve the actions

Digitized by Google

tions of the buſy part of mankind, your anceſtors will be found infinitely more groſs, ſervile, and even diſhoneſt, than you. If, forſaking hiſtory, we only trace them in their hours of amuſement and diſſipation, we ſhall find them more ſenſual, more entirely devoted to pleaſure, and infinitely more ſelfiſh.

The laſt hoſteſs of note I find upon record was Jane Rouſe. She was born among the lower ranks of the people; and by frugality and extreme complaiſance contrived to acquire a moderate fortune: this ſhe might have enjoyed for many years, had ſhe not unfortunately quarrelled with one of her neighbours, a woman who was in high repute for ſanctity through the whole pariſh. In the times of which I ſpeak two women ſeldom quarrelled, that one did not accuſe the other of witchcraft, and ſhe who firſt contrived to vomit crooked pins was ſure to come off victorious. The ſcandal of a modern tea-table differs widely from the ſcandal of former times: the faſcination of a lady's eyes at preſent is regarded as a compliment; but if a lady formerly ſhould be accuſed of having witchcraft in her eyes, it were much better both for her ſoul and body that ſhe had no eyes at all.

In ſhort Jane Rouſe was accuſed of witchcraft; and though ſhe made the beſt defence ſhe could, it was all to no purpoſe; ſhe was taken from her own bar to the bar of the Old-Bailey, condemned, and executed accordingly. Theſe were times indeed! when even women could not ſcold in ſafety.

Since her time the tavern underwent ſeveral revolutions, according to the ſpirit of the times, or the diſpoſition of the reigning monarch. It was this day a brothel, and the next a conventicle for enthuſiaſts. It was one year noted for harbouring whigs, and the next infamous for a retreat to tories. Some years ago it was in high vogue, but at preſent it ſeems

Digitized by Google

declining. This only may be remarked in general that whenever taverns flouriſh moſt, the times are then moſt extravagant and luxurious.——" Lord! " Mrs. Quickly," interrupted I, " you have really " deceived me; I expected a romance, and here " you have been this half hour giving me only a de- " ſcription of the ſpirit of the times: if you have " nothing but tedious remarks to communicate, ſeek " ſome other hearer; I am determined to hearken " only to ſtories."

I had ſcarcely concluded, when my eyes and ears ſeemed open to my landlord, who had been all this while giving me an account of the repairs he had made in the houſe; and was now got into the ſtory of the cracked glaſs in the dining-room.

ESSAY VI.

I AM fond of amuſement in whatever company it is to be found; and wit, though dreſſed in rags, is ever pleaſing to me. I went ſome days ago to take a walk in St. James's Park, about the hour in which company leave it to go to dinner. There were but few in the walks, and thoſe who ſtayed ſeemed by their looks rather more willing to forget that they had an appetite than gain one. I ſat down on one of the benches, at the other end of which was ſeated a man in very ſhabby clothes.

We continued to groan, to hem, and to cough, as uſual upon ſuch occaſions; and at laſt ventured upon converſation. " I beg pardon, ſir," cried I, " but I think I have ſeen you before; your face is " familiar to me." " Yes, ſir," replied he; " I have " a good familiar face, as my friends tell me. I am " as

Digitized by Google

"as well known in every town in England as the "dromedary, or live crocodile. You muſt under-"ſtand, ſir, that I have been theſe ſixteen years "Merry Andrew to a puppet-ſhow; laſt Bartholo-"mew fair my maſter and I quarrelled, beat each "other, and parted; he to ſell his puppets to the "pincuſhion-makers in Roſemary-lane, and I to "ſtarve in St. James's Park."

"I am ſorry, ſir, that a perſon of your appear-"ance ſhould labour under any difficulties." "O "ſir," returned he, "my appearance is very much "at your ſervice; but, though I cannot boaſt of "eating much, yet there are few that are merrier: "if I had twenty thouſand a year I ſhould be very "merry; and, thank the Fates, though not worth a "groat, I am very merry ſtill. If I have three "pence in my pocket, I never refuſed to be my "three halfpence; and if I have no money, I never "ſcorn to be treated by any that are kind enough "to pay my reckoning. What think you, ſir, of a "ſteak and a tankard? You ſhall treat me now; "and I will treat you again when I find you in the "Park in love with eating, and without money to "pay for a dinner."

As I never refuſe a ſmall expenſe for the ſake of a merry companion, we inſtantly adjourned to a neighbouring ale-houſe, and in a few moments had a frothing tankard, and a ſmoaking ſteak ſpread on the table before us. It is impoſſible to expreſs how much the ſight of ſuch good cheer improved my companion's vivacity. "I like this dinner, ſir," ſays he, "for three reaſons: firſt, becauſe I am naturally "fond of beef; ſecondly, becauſe I am hungry; "and, thirdly and laſtly, becauſe I get it for no-"thing: no meat eats ſo ſweet as that for which we "do not pay."

He

Digitized by Google

He therefore now fell-to, and his appetite ſeemed to correſpond with his inclination. After dinner was over, he obſerved that the ſteak was tough; "and yet ſir," returns he, "bad as it was, it "ſeemed a rump-ſteak to me. O the delights of "poverty and a good appetite! We beggars are the "very foundlings of nature; the rich ſhe treats like "an arrant ſtep-mother; they are pleaſed with no-"thing; cut a ſteak from what part you will, and "it is inſupportably tough; dreſs it up with pickles, "and even pickles cannot procure them an appetite. "But the whole creation is filled with good things "for the beggar; Calvert's butt out-taſtes Cham-"pagne, and Sedgeley's homebrewed excels Tokay. "Joy, joy, my blood, though our eſtates lie no "where, we have fortunes wherever we go. If an "inundation ſweeps away half the grounds of Corn-"wall, I am content; I have no lands there: if the "ſtocks ſink, that gives me no uneaſineſs; I am no "Jew." The fellow's vivacity, joined to his poverty, I own, raiſed my curioſity to know ſomething of his life and circumſtances; and I entreated, that he would indulge my deſire.—"That I will, ſir," ſaid he, "and welcome; only let us drink to prevent our "ſleeping; let us have another tankard while we "are awake; let us have another tankard; for, ah, "how charming a tankard looks when full!"

"You muſt know then, that I am very well de-"ſcended; my anceſtors have made ſome noiſe in "the world; for my mother cried oyſters, and my "father beat a drum: I am told we have even had "ſome trumpeters in our family. Many a noble-"man cannot ſhow ſo reſpectful a genealogy: but "that is neither here nor there; as I was their only "child, my father deſigned to breed me up to his "own employment, which was that of a drummer "to a puppet-ſhow. Thus the whole employment "of my younger years was that of interpreter to "Punch

Digitized by Google

" Punch and king Solomon in all his glory. But " though my father was very fond of inſtructing " me in beating all the marches and points of war, " I made no very great progreſs, becauſe I naturally " had no ear for muſic; ſo at the age of fifteen, I " went and liſted for a ſoldier. As I had ever hated " beating a drum, ſo I ſoon found that I diſliked " carrying a muſquet alſo; neither the one trade " nor the other were to my taſte, for I was by na- " ture fond of being a gentleman: beſides, I was " obliged to obey my captain; he has his will, I " have mine, and you have yours: now I very " reaſonably concluded, that it was much more " comfortable for a man to obey his own will than " another's.

" The life of a ſoldier ſoon therefore gave me the " ſpleen; I aſked leave to quit the ſervice; but as " I was tall and ſtrong, my captain thanked me for " my kind intention, and ſaid, becauſe he had a " regard for me, we ſhould not part. I wrote to " my father a very diſmal penitent letter, and deſired " that he would raiſe money to pay for my diſ- " charge; but the good man was as fond of drink- " ing as I was (Sir, my ſervice to you), and thoſe " who are fond of drinking never pay for other peo- " ple's diſcharges: in ſhort he never anſwered my " letter. What could be done? If I have not mo- " ney, ſaid I to myſelf, to pay for my diſcharge, " I muſt find an equivalent ſome other way; and " that muſt be by running away. I deſerted, and " that anſwered my purpoſe every bit as well as if " I had bought my diſcharge.

" Well, I was now fairly rid of my military em- " ployment; I ſold my ſoldier's clothes, bought " worſe, and, in order not to be overtaken, took the " moſt unfrequented roads poſſible. One evening " as I was entering a village, I perceived a man,

" whom

Digitized by Google

" whom I afterwards found to be the curate of the " pariſh, thrown from his horſe in a miry road, " and almoſt ſmothered in the mud. He deſired " my aſſiſtance; I gave it, and drew him out with " ſome difficulty. He thanked me for my trouble, " and was going off; but I followed him home, for " I loved always to have a man thank me at his own " door. The curate aſked an hundred queſtions; " and whoſe ſon I was; from whence I came; and " whether I would be faithful? I anſwered him " greatly to his ſatisfaction; and gave myſelf one " of the beſt characters in the world for ſobriety, " (Sir, I have the honour of drinking your health) " diſcretion, and fidelity. To make a long ſtory " ſhort, he wanted a ſervant, and hired me. With " him I lived but two months; we did not much " like each other; I was fond of eating, and he gave " me but little to eat; I loved a pretty girl, and the " old woman, my fellow-ſervant, was ill-natured and " ugly. As they endeavoured to ſtarve me between " them, I made a pious reſolution to prevent their " committing murder: I ſtole the eggs as ſoon as " they were laid; I emptied every unfiniſhed bottle " that I could lay my hands on; whatever eatable " came in my way was ſure to diſappear: in ſhort " they found I would not do; ſo I was diſcharged " one morning, and paid three ſhillings and ſix- " pence for two months wages.

" While my money was getting ready, I employ- " ed myſelf in making preparations for my depar- " ture; two hens were hatching in an out-houſe, " I went and took the eggs from habit, and not to " ſeparate the parents from the children, I lodged " hens and all in my knapſack. After this piece of " frugality, I returned to receive my money, and " with my knapſack on my back, and a ſtaff in my " hand, I bid adieu with tears in my eyes to my

" old

Digitized by Google

" old benefactor. I had not gone far from the houſe " when I heard behind me the cry of ſtop thief! " but this only increaſed my diſpatch; it would " have been fooliſh to ſtop, as I knew the voice could " not be levelled at me. But hold, I think I paſſed " thoſe two months at the curate's without drinking. " Come, the times are dry, and may this be my poi- " ſon if ever I ſpent two more pious, ſtupid months " in all my life!

" Well, after travelling ſome days, whom ſhould " I light upon, but a company of ſtrolling players. " The moment I ſaw them at a diſtance my heart " warmed to them; I had a ſort of natural love for " every thing of the vagabond order: they were " employed in ſettling their baggage, which had " been overturned in a narrow way; I offered my " aſſiſtance, which they accepted; and we ſoon " became ſo well acquainted, that they took me as " a ſervant. This was a paradiſe to me; they ſung, " danced, drank, eat, and travelled, all at the ſame " time. By the blood of the Mirabels, I thought " I had never lived till then; I grew as merry as a " grig, and laughed at every word that was ſpoken. " They liked me as much as I liked them; I was " a very good figure, as you ſee; and, though I " was poor, I was not modeſt.

" I love a ſtraggling life above all things in the " world; ſometimes good, ſometimes bad; to be " warm to-day, and cold to-morrow; to eat when " one can get it, and drink when (the tankard is " out) it ſtands before me. We arrived that even- " ing at Tenterden, and took a large room at the " Greyhound; where we reſolved to exhibit Romeo " and Juliet, with the funeral proceſſion, the grave " and the garden ſcene. Romeo was to be per- " formed by a gentleman from the Theatre-Royal " in Drury-Lane; Juliet, by a lady who had never

" appeared

Digitized by Google

" appeared on any ſtage before; and I was to ſnuff " the candles: all excellent in our way. We had " figures enough, but the difficulty was to dreſs " them. The ſame coat that ſerved Romeo, turned " with the blue lining outwards, ſerved for his friend " Mercutio: a large piece of crape ſufficed at once " for Juliet's petticoat and pall: a peſtle and mortar " from a neighbouring apothecary's anſwered all the " purpoſes of a bell; and our landlord's own family, " wrapped in white ſheets, ſerved to fill up the " proceſſion. In ſhort, there were but three figures " among us that might be ſaid to be dreſſed with " any propriety: I mean the nurſe, the ſtarved apo- " thecary, and myſelf. Our performance gave uni- " verſal ſatisfaction: the whole audience were en- " chanted with our powers.

" There is one rule by which a ſtrolling-player " may be ever ſecure of ſucceſs; that is, in our " theatrical way of expreſſing it, to make a great " deal of the character. To ſpeak and act as in " common life, is not playing, nor is it what peo- " ple come to ſee: natural ſpeaking, like ſweet wine, " runs glibly over the palate, and ſcarcely leaves any " taſte behind it; but being high in a part reſem- " bles vinegar, which grates upon the taſte, and " one feels it while he is drinking. To pleaſe in " town or country, the way is to cry, wring, cringe " into attitudes, mark the emphaſis, ſlap the pock- " ets, and labour like one in the falling ſickneſs: " that is the way to work for applauſe; that is the " way to gain it.

" As we received much reputation for our ſkill on " this firſt exhibition, it was but natural for me to " aſcribe part of the ſucceſs to myſelf; I ſnuffed the " candles, and let me tell you, that without a can- " dle-ſnuffer, the piece would loſe half its embel- " liſhments. In this manner we continued a fort-

Digitized by Google

" night, and drew tolerable houſes; but the even-
" ing before our intended departure, we gave out
" our very beſt piece, in which all our ſtrength was
" to be exerted. We had great expectations from
" this, and even doubled our prices, when behold
" one of the principal actors fell ill of a violent fever.
" This was a ſtroke like thunder to our little com-
" pany: they were reſolved to go in a body, to
" ſcold the man for falling ſick at ſo inconvenient
" a time, and that too of a diſorder that threatened
" to be expenſive; I ſeized the moment, and offer-
" ed to act the part myſelf in his ſtead. The caſe
" was deſperate: they accepted my offer; and I ac-
" cordingly ſat down, with the part in my hand and
" a tankard before me (Sir, your health), and ſtudied
" the character, which was to be rehearſed the next
" day, and played ſoon after.

" I found my memory exceſſively helped by
" drinking: I learned my part with aſtoniſhing
" rapidity, and bid adieu to ſnuffing candles ever
" after. I found that nature had deſigned me for
" more noble employments, and I was reſolved to
" take her when in the humour. We got together
" in order to rehearſe; and I informed my compa-
" nions, maſters now no longer, of the ſurpriſing
" change I felt within me. Let the ſick man, ſaid
" I, be under no uneaſineſs to get well again; I'll
" fill his place to univerſal ſatisfaction; he may even
" die if he thinks proper; I'll engage that he ſhall
" never be miſſed. I rehearſed before them, ſtrutted,
" ranted, and received applauſe. They ſoon gave
" out that a new actor of eminence was to ap-
" pear, and immediately all the genteel places were
" beſpoke. Before I aſcended the ſtage, however,
" I concluded within myſelf, that as I brought mo-
" ney to the houſe, I ought to have my ſhare in the
" profits. Gentlemen, ſaid I, addreſſing our com-

" pany,

Digitized by Google

" pany, I don't pretend to direct you; far be it
" from me to treat you with ſo much ingratitude:
" you have publiſhed my name in the bills with the
" utmoſt good-nature; and as affairs ſtand cannot
" act without me: ſo gentlemen, to ſhew you my
" gratitude, I expect to be paid for my acting as
" much as any of you, otherwiſe I declare off. I'll
" brandiſh my ſnuffers, and clip candles as uſual.
" This was a very diſagreeable propoſal, but they
" found that it was impoſſible to refuſe it; it was
" irreſiſtible, it was adamant: they conſented, and
" I went on in king Bajazet; my frowning brows,
" bound with a ſtocking ſtuffed into a turban, while
" on my captiv'd arms I brandiſhed a jack-chain.
" Nature ſeemed to have fitted me for the part; I
" was tall, and had a loud voice; my very entrance
" excited univerſal applauſe; I looked round on the
" audience with a ſmile, and made a moſt low and
" graceful bow, for that is the rule among us. As
" it was a very paſſionate part, I invigorated my
" ſpirits with three full glaſſes (the tankard is almoſt
" out) of brandy. By Alla! it is almoſt inconceiv-
" able how I went through it; Tamerlane was but a
" fool to me; though he was ſometimes loud enough
" too, yet I was ſtill louder than he: but then, be-
" ſides, I had attitudes in abundance: in general I
" kept my arms folded up thus, upon the pit of
" my ſtomach; it is the way at Drury-Lane, and
" has always a fine effect. The tankard would ſink
" to the bottom before I could get through the
" whole of my merits: in ſhort, I came off like a pro-
" digy; and ſuch was my ſucceſs, that I could ra-
" viſh the laurels even from a ſirloin of beef. The
" principal gentlemen and ladies of the town came
" to me, after the play was over, to compliment me
" upon my ſucceſs; one praiſed my voice, another
" my perſon: upon my word, ſays the ſquire's lady,

" he

Digitized by Google

" he will make one of the fineſt actors in Europe;
" I ſay it, and I think I am ſomething of a judge.
" ——Praiſe in the beginning is agreeable enough,
" and we receive it as a favour; but when it comes
" in great quantities we regard it only as a debt,
" which nothing but our merit could extort: in-
" ſtead of thanking them, I internally applauded
" myſelf. We were deſired to give our piece a ſe-
" cond time; we obeyed; and I was applauded even
" more than before.

" At laſt we left the town, in order to be at a
" horſe-race at ſome diſtance from thence. I ſhall
" never think of Tenterden without tears of grati-
" tude and reſpect. The ladies and gentlemen there,
" take my word for it, are very good judges of plays
" and actors. Come, let us drink their healths, if
" you pleaſe, ſir. We quitted the town, I ſay; and
" there was a wide difference between my coming
" in and going out: I entered the town a candle-
" ſnuffer, and I quitted it an hero!——Such is the
" world; little to-day, and great to-morrow. I
" could ſay a great deal more upon that ſubject,
" ſomething truly ſublime, upon the ups and downs
" of fortune; but it would give us both the ſpleen,
" and ſo I ſhall paſs it over.

" The races were ended before we arrived at the
" next town, which was no ſmall diſappointment to
" our company; however we were reſolved to take
" all we could get. I played capital characters there
" too, and came off with my uſual brilliancy. I
" ſincerely believe I ſhould have been the firſt actor
" of Europe had my growing merit been properly
" cultivated; but there came an unkindly froſt
" which nipped me in the bud, and levelled me
" once more down to the common ſtandard of hu-
" manity. I played Sir Harry Wildair; all the

Digitized by Google

" country ladies were charmed: if I but drew out " my ſnuff-box the whole houſe was in a roar of " rapture; when I exerciſed my cudgel, I thought " they would have fallen into convulſions.

" There was here a lady who had received an " education of nine months in London; and this " gave her pretenſions to taſte, which rendered her " the indiſputable miſtreſs of the ceremonies wher- " ever ſhe came. She was informed of my merits; " every body praiſed me; yet ſhe refuſed at firſt " going to ſee me perform: ſhe could not conceive, " ſhe ſaid, any thing but ſtuff from a ſtroller; " talked ſomething in praiſe of Garrick, and amazed " the ladies with her ſkill in enunciations, tones, " and cadences; ſhe was at laſt however prevailed " upon to go; and it was privately intimated to me " what a judge was to be preſent at my next exhi- " bition: however, no way intimidated, I came on " in Sir Harry, one hand ſtuck in my breeches, and " the other in my boſom, as uſual at Drury-lane; " but inſtead of looking at me, I perceived the " whole audience had their eyes turned upon the " lady who had been nine months in London; from " her they expected the deciſion which was to ſe- " cure the general's truncheon in my hand, or ſink " me down into a theatrical letter-carrier. I opened " my ſnuff box, took ſnuff; the lady was ſolemn, " and ſo were the reſt; I broke my cudgel on alder- " man Smuggler's back; ſtill gloomy, melancholy " all, the lady groaned and ſhrugged her ſhoulders; " I attempted by laughing myſelf, to excite at leaſt " a ſmile; but the devil a cheek could I perceive " wrinkled into ſympathy: I found it would not " do: all my good-humour now became forced; " my laughter was converted into hyſteric grinning; " and while I pretended ſpirits, my eye ſhowed the

" agony

Digitized by Google

" agony of my heart: in ſhort the lady came with " an intention to be diſpleaſed, and diſpleaſed ſhe " was; my fame expired; I am here, and (the " tankard is no more)!"

ESSAY VII.

WHEN Catharina Alexowna was made empreſs of Ruſſia, the women were in an actual ſtate of bondage, but ſhe undertook to introduce mixed aſſemblies, as in other parts of Europe: ſhe altered the women's dreſs by ſubſtituting the faſhions of England; inſtead of furs, ſhe brought in the uſe of taffeta and damaſk; and cornets and commodes inſtead of caps of ſable. The women now found themſelves no longer ſhut up in ſeparate apartments, but ſaw company, viſited each other, and were preſent at every entertainment.

But as the laws to this effect were directed to a ſavage people, it is amuſing enough, the manner in which the ordinances ran. Aſſemblies were quite unknown among them; the czarina was ſatisfied with introducing them, for ſhe found it impoſſible to render them polite. An ordinance was therefore publiſhed according to their notions of breeding, which, as it is a curioſity, and has never before been printed that we know of, we ſhall give our readers.

" I. The perſon at whoſe houſe the aſſembly is " to be kept, ſhall ſignify the ſame by hanging out " a bill, or by giving ſome other public notice, by " way of advertiſement, to perſons of both ſexes.

Digitized by Google

" II. The assembly shall not be open sooner than " four or five o'clock in the afternoon, nor continue " longer than ten at night.

" III. The master of the house shall not be " obliged to meet his guests, or conduct them out, " or keep them company; but though he is exempt " from all this, he is to find them chairs, candles, " liquors, and all other necessaries that company " may ask for: he is likewise to provide them with " cards, dice, and every necessary for gaming.

" IV. There shall be no fixed hour for coming " or going away; it is enough for a person to appear " in the assembly.

" V. Every one shall be free to sit, walk, or game " as he pleases; nor shall any one go about to hin- " der him, or take exceptions at what he does, up- " on pain of emptying the great eagle (a pint-bowl " full of brandy): it shall likewise be sufficient, at " entering or retiring, to salute the company.

" VI. Persons of distinction, noblemen, superior " officers, merchants and tradesmen of note, head- " workmen, especially carpenters, and persons em- " ployed in chancery, are to have liberty to enter " the assemblies; as likewise their wives and " children.

" VII. A particular place shall be assigned the " footmen, except those of the house, that there " may be room enough in the apartments designed " for the assembly.

" VIII. No ladies are to get drunk upon any " pretence whatsoever; nor shall gentlemen be drunk " before nine.

" IX. Ladies who play at forfeitures, questions " and commands, &c. shall not be riotous: no gen- " tleman shall attempt to force a kiss, and no person " shall offer to strike a woman in the assembly, un- " der pain of future exclusion."

Such

Digitized by Google

Such are the ſtatutes upon this occaſion, which in their very appearance carry an air of ridicule and ſatire. But politeneſs muſt enter every country by degrees; and theſe rules reſemble the breeding of a clown, aukward but ſincere.

ESSAY VIII.

Suppoſed to be written by the Ordinary of Newgate.

MAN is a moſt frail being, incapable of directing his ſteps, unacquainted with what is to happen in this life; and perhaps no man is a more manifeſt inſtance of the truth of this maxim, than Mr. The. Cibber, juſt now gone out of the world. Such a variety of turns of fortune, yet ſuch a perſevering uniformity of conduct, appears in all that happened in his ſhort ſpan, that the whole may be looked upon as one regular confuſion: every action of his life was matter of wonder and ſurprize, and his death was an aſtoniſhment.

This gentleman was born of creditable parents, who gave him a very good education, and a great deal of good learning, ſo that he could read and write before he was ſixteen. However he early diſcovered an inclination to follow lewd courſes; he refuſed to take the advice of his parents, and purſued the bent of his inclination; he played at cards on ſundays, called himſelf a gentleman; fell out with his mother and laundreſs; and even in theſe early days his father was frequently heard to obſerve, that young The.—would be hanged.

Digitized by Google

As he advanced in years, he grew more fond of pleaſure; would eat an ortolan for dinner, though he begged the guinea that bought it; and was once known to give three pounds for a plate of green peaſe, which he had collected over-night as charity for a friend in diſtreſs: he ran into debt with every body that would truſt him, and none could build a ſconce better than he: ſo that at laſt, his creditors ſwore with one accord that The.—would be hanged.

But as getting into debt, by a man who had no viſible means but impudence for ſubſiſtence, is a thing that every reader is not acquainted with, I muſt explain that point a little, and that to his ſatisfaction.

There are three ways of getting into debt; firſt, by puſhing a face; as thus: "You, Mr. Luteſtring, "ſend me home ſix yards of that paduaſoy, dam-"mee;—but, harkee, don't think I ever intend to "pay you for it, dammee." At this the mercer laughs heartily; cuts off the paduaſoy, and ſends it home; nor is he, till too late, ſurpriſed to find the gentleman had ſaid nothing but truth, and kept his word.

The ſecond method of running into debt is called fineering; which is getting goods made up in ſuch a faſhion as to be unfit for every other purchaſer; and, if the tradeſman refuſes to give them credit, then threaten to leave them upon his hands.

But the third and beſt method is called, "Being "the good cuſtomer." The gentleman firſt buys ſome trifle, and pays for it in ready-money; he comes a few days after with nothing about him but bank bills, and buys, we will ſuppoſe, a ſix-penny tweezer-caſe; the bills are too great to be changed, ſo he promiſes to return punctually the day after and pay for what he has bought. In this promiſe he is punctual, and this is repeated for eight or ten times, till

Digitized by Google

till his face is well known, and he has got at laſt the character of a good cuſtomer. By this means he gets credit for ſomething conſiderable, and then never pays for it.

In all this the young man, who is the unhappy ſubject of our preſent reflections, was very expert; and could face, ſineer, and bring cuſtom to a ſhop with any man in England: none of his companions could exceed him in this; and his very companions at laſt ſaid that The.—would be hanged.

As he grew old he grew never the better; he loved ortolans and green peaſe as before; he drank gravy-ſoup when he could get it, and always thought his oyſters taſted beſt when he got them for nothing, or which was juſt the ſame, when he bought them upon tick: thus the old man kept up the vices of the youth, and what he wanted in power, he made up by inclination; ſo that all the world thought that old The.—would be hanged.

And now reader, I have brought him to his laſt ſcene; a ſcene where perhaps my duty ſhould have obliged me to aſſiſt. You expect, perhaps, his dying words, and the tender farewell he took of his wife and children; you expect an account of his coffin and white gloves, his pious ejaculations, and the papers he left behind him. In this I cannot indulge your curioſity; for, oh! the myſteries of Fate, The. ——was drowned!

"Reader," as Hervey ſaith, "pauſe and ponder; "and ponder and pauſe; who knows what thy own "end may be!"

Digitized by Google

ESSAY IX.

I TAKE the liberty to communicate to the public a few looſe thoughts upon a ſubject, which, though often handled, has not yet in my opinion been fully diſcuſſed: I mean National Concord, or Unanimity, which in this kingdom has been generally conſidered as a bare poſſibility, that exiſted no where but in ſpeculation. Such an union is perhaps neither to be expected nor wiſhed for in a country, whoſe liberty depends rather upon the genius of the people, than upon any precautions which they have taken in a conſtitutional way for the guard and preſervation of this ineſtimable bleſſing.

There is a very honeſt gentleman with whom I have been acquainted theſe thirty years, during which there has not been one ſpeech uttered againſt the miniſtry in parliament, nor ſtruggle at an election for a burgeſs to ſerve in the Houſe of Commons, nor a pamphlet publiſhed in oppoſition to any meaſure of the Adminiſtration, nor even a private cenſure paſſed in his hearing upon the miſconduct of any perſon concerned in public affairs, but he is immediately alarmed, and loudly exclaims againſt ſuch factious doings, in order to ſet the people by the ears together at ſuch a delicate juncture. "At any other time (ſays he) ſuch oppoſition might not be improper, and I don't queſtion the facts that are alledged; but at this criſis, Sir, to inflame the nation!—the man deſerves to be puniſhed as a traitor to his country." In a word, according to this gentleman's opinion, the nation has been in a violent criſis at any time theſe thirty years; and were it poſſible

Digitized by Google

poſſible for him to live another century, he would never find any period, at which a man might with ſafety impugn the infallibility of a miniſter.

The caſe is no more than this: my honeſt friend has inveſted his whole fortune in the Stocks, on Government ſecurity, and trembles at every whiff of popular diſcontent. Were every Britiſh ſubject of the ſame tame and timid diſpoſition, Magna Charta (to uſe the coarſe phraſe of Oliver Cromwell) would be no more regarded by an ambitious Prince than Magna F—ta, and the liberties of England expire without a groan. Oppoſition, when reſtrained within due bounds, is the ſalubrious gale that ventilates the opinions of the people, which might otherwiſe ſtagnate into the moſt abject ſubmiſſion. It may be ſaid to purify the atmoſphere of politics; to diſpel the groſs vapours raiſed by the influence of miniſterial artifice and corruption, until the Conſtitution, like a mighty rock, ſtands full diſcloſed to the view of every individual, who dwells within the ſhade of its protection. Even when this gale blows with augmented violence, it generally tends to the advantage of the Commonwealth: it awakes the apprehenſion, and conſequently arouſes all the faculties of the pilot at the helm, who redoubles his vigilance and caution, exerts his utmoſt ſkill, and becoming acquainted with the nature of the navigation, in a little time learns to ſuit his canvas to the roughneſs of the ſea, and the trim of the veſſel. Without theſe intervening ſtorms of oppoſition to exerciſe his faculties, he would become enervate, negligent, and preſumptuous; and in the wantonneſs of his power, truſting to ſome deceitful calm, perhaps hazard a ſtep that would wreck the conſtitution. Yet there is a meaſure in all things. A moderate froſt will fertilize the glebe with nitrous particles, and deſtroy the eggs of pernicious inſects, that prey upon the fancy of the year:

Digitized by Google

year: but if this froſt increaſes in ſeverity and duration, it will chill the ſeeds, and even freeze up the roots of vegetables; it will check the bloom, nip the buds, and blaſt all the promiſe of the ſpring. The vernal breeze that drives the fogs before it, that bruſhes the cobwebs from the boughs, that fans the air and foſters vegetation, if augmented to a tempeſt, will ſtrip the leaves, overthrow the tree, and deſolate the garden. The auſpicious gale before which the trim veſſel plows the boſom of the ſea, while the mariners are kept alert in duty and in ſpirits, if converted to a hurricane, overwhelms the crew with terror and confuſion. The ſails are rent, the cordage cracked, the maſts give way; the maſter eyes the havock with mute deſpair, and the veſſel founders in the ſtorm. Oppoſition, when confined within its proper channel, ſweeps away thoſe beds of ſoil and banks of ſand which corruptive power had gathered; but when it overflows its banks, and deluges the plain, its courſe is marked by ruin and devaſtation.

The oppoſition neceſſary in a free ſtate, like that of Great Britain, is not at all incompatible with that national concord, which ought to unite the people on all emergencies, in which the general ſafety is at ſtake. It is the jealouſy of patriotiſm, not the rancour of party; the warmth of candour, not the virulence of hate; a tranſient diſpute among friends, not an implacable feud that admits of no reconciliation. The hiſtory of all ages teems with the fatal effects of internal diſcord; and were hiſtory and tradition annihilated, common ſenſe would plainly point out the miſchiefs that muſt ariſe from want of harmony and national union. Every ſchool-boy can have recourſe to the fable of the rods, which, when united in a bundle, no ſtrength could bend; but when ſeparated into ſingle twigs, a child could break with eaſe.

ESSAY

Digitized by Google

ESSAY X.

I HAVE ſpent the greater part of my life in making obſervations on men and things, and in projecting ſchemes for the advantage of my country; and though my labours met with an ungrateful return, I will ſtill perſiſt in my endeavours for its ſervice, like that venerable, unſhaken, and neglected patriot Mr. Jacob Henriquez, who, though of the Hebrew nation, hath exhibited a ſhining example of Chriſtian fortitude and perſeverance *. And here my conſcience urges me to confeſs, that the hint upon which the following propoſals are built was taken from an advertiſement of the ſaid patriot Henriquez, in which he gave the public to underſtand, that Heaven had indulged him with "ſeven bleſſed daughters." Bleſſed they are, no doubt, on account of their own and their father's virtues; but more bleſſed may they be, if the ſcheme I offer ſhould be adopted by the Legiſlature.

The proportion which the number of females born in theſe kingdoms bears to the male children, is, I think, ſuppoſed to be as thirteen to fourteen: but as women are not ſo ſubject as the other ſex to accidents and intemperance, in numbering adults we ſhall find the balance on the female ſide. If, in calculating the numbers of the people, we take in the multitudes that emigrate to the Plantations, whence they never return, thoſe that die at ſea and make their exit at Tyburn, together with

* A man well known at this period (1762), as well as during many preceding years, for the numerous ſchemes he was daily offering to various Miniſters for the purpoſe of raiſing money by loans, paying off the national incumbrances, &c. &c. none of which, however, were ever known to have received the ſmalleſt notice.

the

Digitized by Google

the conſumption of the preſent war by ſea and land in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, in the German and Indian Oceans, in Old France, New France, North America, the Leeward Iſlands, Germany, Africa, and Aſia, we may fairly ſtate the loſs of men during the war at one hundred thouſand. If this be the caſe, there muſt be a ſuperplus of the other ſex amounting to the ſame number, and this ſuperplus will conſiſt of women able to bear arms; as I take it for granted, that all thoſe who are fit to bear children are likewiſe fit to bear arms. Now as we have ſeen the nation governed by old women, I hope to make it appear that it may be defended by young women; and ſurely this ſcheme will not be rejected as unneceſſary at ſuch a juncture *, when our armies in the four quarters of the globe are in want of recruits; when we find ourſelves entangled in a new war with Spain, on the eve of a rupture in Italy, and indeed in a fair way of being obliged to make head againſt all the great Potentates of Europe.

But, before I unfold my deſign, it may be neceſſary to obviate, from experience as well as argument, the objections which may be made to the delicate frame and tender diſpoſition of the female ſex, rendering them incapable of the toils, and inſuperably averſe to the horrors of war. All the world has heard of the nation of Amazons, who inhabited the banks of the river Thermodoon in Cappadocia; who expelled their men by force of arms, defended themſelves by their own proweſs, managed the reins of government, proſecuted the operations in war, and held the other ſex in the utmoſt contempt. We are informed by Homer, that Pentheſilea, queen of the Amazons, acted as auxiliary to Priam, and fell valiantly fighting in his cauſe before the walls of Troy. Quintus Curtius tells us, that Thaleſtris

* In the year 1762.

brought

Digitized by Google

brought one hundred armed Amazons in a preſent to Alexander the Great. Diodorus Siculus expreſſly ſays, there was a nation of female warriors in Africa, who fought againſt the Lybian Hercules. We read in the Voyages of Columbus, that one of the Caribbee Iſlands was poſſeſſed by a tribe of female warriors, who kept all the neighbouring Indians in awe; but we need not go farther than our own age and country to prove, that the ſpirit and conſtitution of the fair ſex are equal to the dangers and fatigues of war. Every novice who has read the authentic and important Hiſtory of the Pirates, is well acquainted with the exploits of two heroines, called Mary Read and Anne Bonny. I myſelf have had the honour to drink with Anne Caſſier, alias Mother Wade, who had diſtinguiſhed herſelf among the Buccaneers of America, and in her old age kept a punch-houſe in Port-Royal of Jamaica. I have likewiſe converſed with Moll Davis, who had ſerved as a dragoon in all queen Anne's wars, and was admitted on the penſion of Chelſea. The late war with Spain, and even the preſent, hath produced inſtances of females enliſting both in the land and ſea ſervice, and behaving with remarkable bravery in the diſguiſe of the other ſex. And who has not heard of the celebrated Jenny Cameron, and ſome other enterprifing ladies of North-Britain, who attended a certain Adventurer in all his expeditions, and headed their reſpective clans in a military character? That ſtrength of body is often equal to the courage of mind implanted in the fair ſex, will not be denied by thoſe who have ſeen the waterwomen of Plymouth; the female drudges of Ireland, Wales, and Scotland; the fiſhwomen of Billingſgate; the weeders, podders, and hoppers, who ſwarm in the fields; and the bunters who ſwagger in the ſtreets of London; not to mention the indefatigable trulls who follow the camp, and keep up with

Digitized by Google

with the line of march, though loaded with bantlings and other baggage.

There is ſcarcely a ſtreet in this metropolis without one or more viragos, who diſcipline their huſbands and domineer over the whole neighbourhood. Many months are not elapſed ſince I was witneſs to a pitched battle between two athletic females, who fought with equal ſkill and fury until one of them gave out, after having ſuſtained ſeven falls on the hard ſtones. They were both ſtripped to the underpetticoat; their breaſts were carefully ſwathed with handkerchiefs, and as no veſtiges of features were to be ſeen in either when I came up, I imagined the combatants were of the other ſex, until a byſtander aſſured me of the contrary, giving me to underſtand, that the conqueror had lain-in about five weeks of twin-baſtards, begot by her ſecond, who was an Iriſh chairman. When I ſee the avenues of the Strand beſet every night with troops of fierce Amazons, who, with dreadful imprecations, ſtop and beat and plunder paſſengers, I cannot help wiſhing, that ſuch martial talents were converted to the benefit of the public; and that thoſe who are ſo loaded with temporal fire, and ſo little afraid of eternal fire, ſhould, inſtead of ruining the ſouls and bodies of their fellow-citizens, be put in a way of turning their deſtructive qualities againſt the enemies of the nation.

Having thus demonſtrated that the fair ſex are not deficient in ſtrength and reſolution, I would humbly propoſe, that as there is an exceſs on their ſide in quantity to the amount of one hundred thouſand, part of that number may be employed in recruiting the army, as well as in raiſing thirty new Amazonian regiments, to be commanded by females, and ſerve in regimentals adapted to their ſex. The Amazons of old appeared with the left breaſt bare, an open jacket and

Digitized by Google

and trowſers, that deſcended no farther than the knee; the right breaſt was deſtroyed, that it might not impede them in bending the bow, or darting the javelin; but there is no occaſion for this cruel exciſion in the preſent diſcipline, as we have ſeen inſtances of women who handle the muſquet, without finding any inconvenience from that protuberance.

As the ſex love gaiety, they may be cloathed in veſts of pink ſatin and open drawers of the ſame, with buſkins on their feet and legs, their hair tied behind and floating on their ſhoulders, and their hats adorned with white feathers: they may be armed with light carbines and long bayonets, without the incumbrance of ſwords or ſhoulder-belts. I make no doubt but many young ladies of figure and faſhion will undertake to raiſe companies at their own expence, provided they like their colonels; but I muſt inſiſt upon it, if this ſcheme ſhould be embraced, that Mr. Henriquez's ſeven bleſſed daughters may be provided with commiſſions, as the project is in ſome meaſure owing to the hints of that venerable patriot. I moreover give it as my opinion, that Mrs. Kitty Fiſher * ſhall have the command of a battalion, and the nomination of her own officers, provided ſhe will warrant them all ſound, and be content to wear proper badges of diſtinction.

A female brigade, properly diſciplined and accoutred, would not, I am perſuaded, be afraid to charge a numerous body of the enemy, over whom they would have a manifeſt advantage; for if the barbarous Scythians were aſhamed to fight with the Amazons who invaded them, ſurely the French, who pique themſelves on their ſenſibility and devotion to the fair ſex, would not act upon the offenſive againſt a band of female warriors, arrayed in all the charms of youth and beauty.

* A celebrated Courtezan of that time.

ESSAY

Digitized by Google

ESSAY XI.

AS I am one of that ſauntering tribe of mortals, who ſpend the greateſt part of their time in taverns, coffee-houſes, and other places of public reſort, I have thereby an opportunity of obſerving an infinite variety of characters, which, to a perſon of a contemplative turn, is a much higher entertainment than a view of all the curioſities of art or nature. In one of theſe my late rambles, I accidentally fell into the company of half a dozen gentlemen, who were engaged in a warm diſpute about ſome political affair; the deciſion of which, as they were equally divided in their ſentiments, they thought proper to refer to me, which naturally drew me in for a ſhare of the converſation.

Amongſt a multiplicity of other topics, we took occaſion to talk of the different characters of the ſeveral nations of Europe; when one of the gentlemen, cocking his hat, and aſſuming ſuch an air of importance as if he had poſſeſſed all the merit of the Engliſh nation in his own perſon, declared that the Dutch were a parcel of avaricious wretches; the French a ſet of flattering ſycophants; that the Germans were drunken ſots, and beaſtly gluttons; and the Spaniards proud, haughty, and furly tyrants; but that in bravery, generoſity, clemency, and in every other virtue, the Engliſh excelled all the reſt of the world.

This very *learned* and *judicious remark* was received with a general ſmile of approbation by all the company—all, I mean, but your Humble Servant; who, endeavouring to keep my gravity as well as I could, and reclining my head upon my arm, continued

Digitized by Google

tinued for ſome time in a poſture of affected thoughtfulneſs, as if I had been muſing on ſomething elſe, and did not ſeem to attend to the ſubject of converſation; hoping by theſe means to avoid the diſagreeable neceſſity of explaining myſelf, and thereby depriving the gentleman of his imaginary happineſs.

But my pſeudo-patriot had no mind to let me eſcape ſo eaſily. Not ſatisfied that his opinion ſhould paſs without contradiction, he was determined to have it ratified by the ſuffrage of every one in the company; for which purpoſe, addreſſing himſelf to me with an air of inexpreſſible confidence, he aſked me if I was not of the ſame way of thinking. As I am never forward in giving my opinion, eſpecially when I have reaſon to believe that it will not be agreeable; ſo, when I am obliged to give it, I always hold it for a maxim to ſpeak my real ſentiments. I therefore told him, that for my own part, I ſhould not have ventured to talk in ſuch a peremptory ſtrain, unleſs I had made the tour of Europe, and examined the manners of theſe ſeveral nations with great care and accuracy: that perhaps a more impartial judge would not ſcruple to affirm, that the Dutch were more frugal and induſtrious, the French more temperate and polite, the Germans more hardy and patient of labour and fatigue, and the Spaniards more ſtaid and ſedate, than the Engliſh; who, though undoubtedly brave and generous, were at the ſame time raſh, headſtrong, and impetuous; too apt to be elated with proſperity, and to deſpond in adverſity.

I could eaſily perceive, that all the company began to regard me with a jealous eye before I had finiſhed my anſwer, which I had no ſooner done, than the patriotic gentleman obſerved, with a contemptuous ſneer, that he was greatly ſurprized how ſome people could have the conſcience to live in a country, which

Digitized by Google

they did not love, and to enjoy the protection of a government, to which in their hearts they were inveterate enemies. Finding that by this modeſt declaration of my ſentiments I had forfeited the good opinion of my companions, and given them occaſion to call my political principles in queſtion, and well knowing that it was in vain to argue with men, who were ſo very full of themſelves, I threw down my reckoning, and retired to my own lodgings, reflecting on the abſurd and ridiculous nature of national prejudice and prepoſſeſſion.

Among all the famous ſayings of antiquity, there is none that does greater honour to the author, or affords greater pleaſure to the reader (at leaſt if he be a perſon of a generous and benevolent heart) than that of the philoſopher, who, being aſked what "countryman he was," replied that he was "a citizen of the world." How few are there to be found in modern times who can ſay the ſame, or whoſe conduct is conſiſtent with ſuch a profeſſion! We are now become ſo much Engliſhmen, Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Spaniards, or Germans, that we are no longer citizens of the world; ſo much the natives of one particular ſpot, or members of one petty ſociety, that we no longer conſider ourſelves as the general inhabitants of the globe, or members of that grand ſociety which comprehends the whole human kind.

Did theſe prejudices prevail only among the meaneſt and loweſt of the people, perhaps they might be excuſed, as they have few, if any, opportunities of correcting them by reading, travelling, or converſing with foreigners; but the misfortune is, that they infect the minds, and influence the conduct, even of our gentlemen; of thoſe, I mean, who have every title to this appellation but an exemption from prejudice, which however in my opinion ought to be regarded as the characteriſtical mark

Digitized by Google

mark of a gentleman; for let a man's birth be ever ſo high, his ſtation ever ſo exalted, or his fortune ever ſo large, yet if he is not free from national and other prejudices, I ſhould make bold to tell him, that he had a low and vulgar mind, and had no juſt claim to the character of a gentleman. And in fact you will always find, that thoſe are moſt apt to boaſt of national merit, who have little or no merit of their own to depend on; than which to be ſure nothing is more natural: the ſlender vine twiſts around the ſturdy oak for no other reaſon in the world, but becauſe it has not ſtrength ſufficient to ſupport itſelf.

Should it be alledged in defence of national prejudice, that it is the natural and neceſſary growth of love to our country, and that therefore the former cannot be deſtroyed without hurting the latter, I anſwer, that this is a groſs fallacy and deluſion. That it is the growth of love to our country, I will allow; but that it is the natural and neceſſary growth of it, I abſolutely deny. Superſtition and enthuſiaſm too are the growth of religion; but who ever took it in his head to affirm, that they are the neceſſary growth of this noble principle? They are, if you will, the baſtard ſprouts of this heavenly plant, but not its natural and genuine branches, and may ſafely enough be lopt off, without doing any harm to the parent ſtock: nay, perhaps, till once they are lopt off, this goodly tree can never flouriſh in perfect health and vigour.

Is it not very poſſible that I may love my own country, without hating the natives of other countries? that I may exert the moſt heroic bravery, the moſt undaunted reſolution, in defending its laws and liberty, without deſpiſing all the reſt of the world as cowards and poltroons? Moſt certainly it is; and if it were not—But what need I ſuppoſe what is ab-

Digitized by Google

ſolutely impoſſible?—But if it were not, I muſt own, I ſhould prefer the title of the ancient philoſopher, viz. a Citizen of the World, to that of an Engliſhman, a Frenchman, an European, or to any any other appellation whatever.

ESSAY XII.

AMIDST the frivolous purſuits and pernicious diſſipations of the preſent age, a reſpect for the qualities of the underſtanding ſtill prevails to ſuch a degree, that almoſt every individual pretends to have a Taſte for the Belles Lettres. The ſpruce prentice ſets up for a critic, and the puny beau piques himſelf upon being a connoiſſeur. Without aſſigning cauſes for this univerſal preſumption, we ſhall proceed to obſerve, that if it was attended with no other inconvenience than that of expoſing the pretender to the ridicule of thoſe few, who can ſift his pretenſions, it might be unneceſſary to undeceive the publick, or to endeavour at the reformation of innocent folly, productive of no evil to the commonwealth. But in reality this folly is productive of manifold evils to the community. If the reputation of taſte can be acquired, without the leaſt aſſiſtance of literature, by reading modern poems, and ſeeing modern plays, what perſon will deny himſelf the pleaſure of ſuch an eaſy qualification? Hence the youth of both ſexes are debauched to diverſion, and ſeduced from much more profitable occupations into idle endeavours after literary fame; and a ſuperficial falſe Taſte, founded on ignorance and conceit, takes poſſeſſion

Digitized by Google

poſſeſſion of the publick. The acquiſition of learning, the ſtudy of nature, is neglected as ſuperfluous labour; and the beſt faculties of the mind remain unexerciſed, and indeed unopened, by the power of thought and reflection. Falſe Taſte will not only diffuſe itſelf through all our amuſements, but even influence our moral and political conduct: for what is falſe Taſte, but want of perception to diſcern propriety and diſtinguiſh beauty?

It has been often alledged, that Taſte is a natural talent, as independent of Art as ſtrong eyes, or a delicate ſenſe of ſmelling; and without all doubt the principal ingredient in the compoſition of Taſte, is a natural ſenſibility, without which it cannot exiſt; but it differs from the ſenſes in this particular, that they are finiſhed by Nature; whereas Taſte cannot be brought to perfection without proper cultivation: for Taſte pretends to judge not only of Nature, but alſo of Art; and that judgment is founded upon obſervation and compariſon.

What Horace has ſaid of Genius is ſtill more applicable to Taſte.

Naturâ fieret laudabile carmen, an arte,
Quæſitum eſt. Ego nec ſtudium ſine divite venâ,
Nec rude quid proſit video ingenium: alterius ſic
Altera poſcit opem res, & conjurat amicè.

HOR. ART. POET.

'Tis long diſputed, whether poets claim
From *Art* or *Nature* their beſt right to fame;
But *Art*, if not enrich'd by Nature's vein,
And a rude *Genius* of uncultur'd ſtrain,
Are uſeleſs both; but when in friendſhip join'd,
A mutual ſuccour in each other find.

FRANCIS.

We have ſeen *Genius* ſhine without the help of *Art*; but *Taſte* muſt be cultivated by Art, before it will produce agreeable fruit. This however we muſt ſtill inculcate with Quintilian, that ſtudy, precept,

Digitized by Google

and obſervation, will nought avail, without the aſſiſtance of Nature:

Illud tamen imprimis teſtandum eſt, nihil præcepta atque artes valere, niſi adjuvante naturâ.

Yet even though Nature has done her part, by implanting the ſeeds of Taſte, great pains muſt be taken, and great ſkill exerted, in raiſing them to a proper pitch of vegetation. The judicious Tutor muſt gradually and tenderly unfold the mental faculties of the Youth committed to his charge. He muſt cheriſh his delicate perception; ſtore his mind with proper ideas; point out the different channels of obſervation; teach him to compare objects; to eſtabliſh the limits of right and wrong, of truth and falſehood; to diſtinguiſh beauty from tinſel, and grace from affectation; in a word, to ſtrengthen and improve by culture, experience, and inſtruction, thoſe natural powers of feeling and ſagacity, which conſtitute the faculty called Taſte, and enable the profeſſor to enjoy the delights of the Belles Lettres.

We cannot agree in opinion with thoſe, who imagine that Nature has been equally favourable to all men, in conferring upon them a fundamental capacity, which may be improved to all the refinement of Taſte and Criticiſm. Every day's experience convinces us of the contrary. Of two Youths educated under the ſame Preceptor, inſtructed with the ſame care, and cultivated with the ſame aſſiduity, one ſhall not only comprehend, but even anticipate the leſſons of his Maſter, by dint of natural diſcernment; while the other toils in vain to imbibe the leaſt tincture of inſtruction. Such indeed is the diſtinction between Genius and Stupidity, which every man has an opportunity of ſeeing among his friends and acquaintance. Not that we ought too haſtily to decide

Digitized by Google

decide upon the natural capacities of children, before we have maturely conſidered the peculiarity of diſpoſition, and the bias by which Genius may be ſtrangely warped from the common path of education. A youth incapable of retaining one rule of grammar, or of acquiring the leaſt knowledge of the claſſics, may nevertheleſs make great progreſs in mathematics; nay he may have a ſtrong genius for the mathematics, without being able to comprehend a demonſtration of Euclid; becauſe his mind conceives in a peculiar manner, and is ſo intent upon contemplating the object in one particular point of view, that it cannot perceive it in any other. We have known an inſtance of a boy, who, while his maſter complained that he had not capacity to comprehend the properties of a right-angled triangle, had actually, in private, by the power of his genius, formed a mathematical ſyſtem of his own, diſcovered a ſeries of curious theorems, and even applied his deductions to practical machines of ſurpriſing conſtruction. Beſides, in the education of youth, we ought to remember, that ſome capacities are like the *pyra præcocia*; they ſoon blow, and ſoon attain to all that degree of maturity which they are capable of acquiring; while on the other hand there are geniuſes of ſlow growth, that are late in burſting the bud and long in ripening. Yet the firſt ſhall yield a faint bloſſom and inſipid fruit; whereas the produce of the other ſhall be diſtinguiſhed and admired for its well-concocted juice and exquiſite flavour. We have known a boy of five years of age ſurpriſe every body by playing on the violin in ſuch a manner as ſeemed to promiſe a prodigy in muſic. He had all the aſſiſtance that art could afford; by the age of ten his genius was at the ακμη; yet after that period, notwithſtanding the moſt intenſe application, he never gave the leaſt ſigns of improvement.

Digitized by Google

At ſix he was admired as a miracle of muſic; at ſix and twenty he was neglected as an ordinary fiddler. The celebrated Dean Swift was a remarkable inſtance in the other extreme. He was long conſidered as an incorrigible dunce, and did not obtain his degree at the Univerſity but *ex ſpeciali gratia:* yet when his powers began to unfold, he ſignalized himſelf by a very remarkable ſuperiority of genius. When a youth therefore appears dull of apprehenſion, and ſeems to derive no advantage from ſtudy and inſtruction, the tutor muſt exerciſe his ſagacity in diſcovering whether the ſoil be abſolutely barren, or ſown with ſeed repugnant to its nature, or of ſuch a quality as requires repeated culture and length of time to ſet its juices in fermentation. Theſe obſervations however relate to Capacity in general, which we ought carefully to diſtinguiſh from Taſte. Capacity implies the power of retaining what is received; Taſte is the power of reliſhing or rejecting whatever is offered for the entertainment of the imagination. A man may have capacity to acquire what is called Learning and Philoſophy; but he muſt have alſo ſenſibility before he feels thoſe emotions, with which Taſte receives the impreſſions of beauty.

Natural Taſte is apt to be ſeduced and debauched by vicious precept and bad example. There is a dangerous tinſel in falſe Taſte, by which the unwary mind and young imagination are often faſcinated. Nothing has been ſo often explained, and yet ſo little underſtood, as ſimplicity in writing. Simplicity in this acceptation has a larger ſignification than either the ἁπλοῦν of the Greeks, or the *ſimplex* of the Latins; for it implies beauty. It is the ἁπλόον καὶ ἡδύν of Demetrius Phalerus, the *ſimplex munditiis* of Horace, and expreſſed by one word, *naïveté* in the French language. It is in fact no other than beautiful nature, without affectation or extraneous

Digitized by Google

extraneous ornament. In ſtatuary, it is the Venus of Medicis; in architecture, the Pantheon. It would be an endleſs taſk to enumerate all the inſtances of this natural ſimplicity, that occur in poetry and painting, among the antients and moderns. We ſhall only mention two examples of it, the beauty of which conſiſts in the pathetic.

Anaxagoras, the philoſopher and preceptor of Pericles, being told that both his ſons were dead, laid his hand upon his heart, and after a ſhort pauſe conſoled himſelf with a reflection couched in three words, ἤδειν θνητὸς γεγεννηκώς, "I knew they were mortal." The other inſtance we ſelect from the tragedy of Macbeth. The gallant Macduff, being informed that his wife and children were murdered by order of the tyrant, pulls his hat over his eyes, and his internal agony burſts out into an exclamation of four words, the moſt expreſſive perhaps that ever were uttered: "He has no children." This is the energetic language of ſimple Nature, which is now grown into diſrepute. By the preſent mode of education we are forcibly warped from the bias of nature, and all ſimplicity in manners is rejected. We are taught to diſguiſe and diſtort our ſentiments, until the faculty of thinking is diverted into an unnatural channel; and we not only relinquiſh and forget, but alſo become incapable of our original diſpoſitions. We are totally changed into creatures of art and affectation. Our perception is abuſed, and even our ſenſes are perverted. Our minds loſe their native force and flavour. The imagination, ſweated by artificial fire, produces nought but vapid bloom. The genius, inſtead of growing like a vigorous tree, extending its branches on every ſide, and bearing delicious fruit, reſembles a ſtunted yew, tortured into ſome wretched form, projecting no ſhade, diſplaying no flower, diffuſing no fragrance, yielding

Digitized by Google

yielding no fruit, and affording nothing but a barren conceit for the amuſement of the idle ſpectator.

Thus debauched from Nature, how can we reliſh her genuine productions? As well might a man diſtinguiſh objects through a priſm, that preſents nothing but a variety of colours to the eye; or a maid pining in the green ſickneſs prefer a biſcuit to a cinder. It has been often alledged that the paſſions can never be wholly depoſited; and that by appealing to theſe, a good writer will always be able to force himſelf into the hearts of his readers: but even the ſtrongeſt paſſions are weakened, nay ſometimes totally extinguiſhed, by mutual oppoſition, diſſipation, and acquired inſenſibility. How often at the theatre is the tear of ſympathy and the burſt of laughter repreſſed by a ridiculous ſpecies of pride, refuſing approbation to the author and actor, and renouncing ſociety with the audience! This ſeeming inſenſibility is not owing to any original defect. Nature has ſtretched the ſtring, though it has long ceaſed to vibrate. It may have been diſplaced and diſtracted by the violence of pride; it may have loſt its tone through long diſuſe; or be ſo twiſted or overſtrained, as to produce the moſt jarring diſcords.

If ſo little regard is paid to Nature when ſhe knocks ſo powerfully at the breaſt, ſhe muſt be altogether neglected and deſpiſed in her calmer mood of ſerene tranquillity, when nothing appears to recommend her but ſimplicity, propriety, and innocence. A perſon muſt have delicate feelings that can taſte the celebrated repartee in Terence: *Homo ſum; nihil humani à me alienum puto:* "I am a man; therefore think I have an intereſt in every thing that concerns humanity." A clear blue ſky, ſpangled with ſtars, will prove an inſipid object to eyes accuſtomed to the glare of torches and tapers, gilding and glitter; eyes, that will turn with diſguſt from the

Digitized by Google

the green mantle of the ſpring, ſo gorgeouſly adorned with buds and foliage, flowers and bloſſoms, to contemplate a gaudy ſilken robe, ſtriped and interſected with unfriendly tints, that fritter the maſſes of light and diſtract the viſion, pinked into the moſt fantaſtic forms, flounced, and furbelowed, and fringed with all the littleneſs of art unknown to elegance.

Thoſe ears, that are offended by the notes of the thruſh, the blackbird, and the nightingale, will be regaled and raviſhed by the ſqueaking fiddle touched by a muſician, who has no other genius than that which lies in his fingers: they will even be entertained with the rattling of coaches, and the alarming knock, by which the doors of faſhionable people are ſo loudly diſtinguiſhed. The ſenſe of ſmelling, that delights in the ſcent of excrementitious animal juices, ſuch as muſk, civet, and urinous ſalts, will loath the fragrance of new-mown hay, the ſweet-briar, the honey-ſuckle, and the roſe. The organs, that are gratified with the taſte of ſickly veal bled into a palſy, crammed fowls, and dropſical brawn, peaſe without ſubſtance, peaches without taſte, and pine-apples without flavour, will certainly nauſeate the native, genuine, and ſalutary taſte of Welch beef, Banſtead mutton, and barn-door fowls, whoſe juices are concocted by a natural digeſtion, and whoſe fleſh is conſolidated by free air and exerciſe. In ſuch a total perverſion of the ſenſes, the ideas muſt be miſrepreſented; the powers of the imagination diſordered, and the judgement of conſequence unſound. The diſeaſe is attended with a falſe appetite, which the natural food of the mind will not ſatisfy. It will prefer Ovid to Tibullus, and the rant of Lee to the tenderneſs of Otway. The ſoul ſinks into a kind of ſleepy idiotiſm; and is diverted by toys and baubles, which can only be pleaſing

Digitized by Google

pleaſing to the moſt ſuperficial curioſity. It is enlivened by a quick ſucceſſion of trivial objects, that gliſten and dance before the eye; and, like an infant, is kept awake and inſpirited by the ſound of a rattle. It muſt not only be dazzled and arouſed, but alſo cheated, hurried, and perplexed by the artifice of deception, buſineſs, intricacy, and intrigue; a kind of low juggle, which may be termed the leger-demain of Genius.

In this ſtate of depravity the mind cannot enjoy, nor indeed diſtinguiſh the charms of natural and moral beauty and decorum. The ingenuous bluſh of native innocence, the plain language of antient faith and ſincerity, the cheerful reſignation to the will of Heaven, the mutual affection of the Charities, the voluntary reſpect paid to ſuperior dignity or ſtation, the virtue of beneficence, extended even to the brute creation, nay the very crimſon glow of health, and ſwelling lines of beauty, are deſpiſed, deteſted, ſcorned, and ridiculed, as ignorance, rudeneſs, ruſticity, and ſuperſtition. Thus we ſee how moral and natural beauty are connected; and of what importanceit is, even to the formation of Taſte, that the manners ſhould be ſeverely ſuperintended. This is ataſk which ought to take the lead of ſcience; for we will venture to ſay, that Virtue is the foundation of Taſte; or rather, that Virtue and Taſte are built upon the ſame foundation of ſenſibility, and cannot be disjoined without offering violence to both. But Virtue muſt be informed, and Taſte inſtructed, otherwiſe they will both remain imperfect and ineffectual:

Qui didicit patriæ quid debeat, et quid amicis,
Quo ſit amore parens, quo frater amandus, et hoſpes,
Quod ſit Conſcripti, quod judicis officium, quæ
Partes in bellum miſſi ducis; ille profecto
Reddere perſonæ ſcit convenientia cuique.

The

Digitized by Google

The Critic, who with nice diſcernment knows
What to his country and his friends he owes;
How various Nature warms the human breaſt,
To love the parent, brother, friend, or gueſt;
What the great functions of our judges are,
Of Senators, and Generals ſent to war;
He can diſtinguiſh, with unerring art,
The ſtrokes peculiar to each different part.

HOR.

Thus we ſee Taſte is compoſed of Nature improved by Art; of Feeling tutored by Inſtruction.

ESSAY XIII.

HAVING explained what we conceive to be True Taſte, and in ſome meaſure accounted for the prevalence of Vitiated Taſte, we ſhould proceed to point out the moſt effectual manner, in which a natural capacity may be improved into a delicacy of judgement, and an intimate acquaintance with the Belles Lettres. We ſhall take it for granted that proper means have been uſed to form the manners, and attach the mind to virtue. The heart cultivated by precept, and warmed by example, improves in ſenſibility, which is the foundation of Taſte. By diſtinguiſhing the influence and ſcope of morality, and cheriſhing the ideas of benevolence, it acquires a habit of ſympathy, which tenderly feels reſponſive, like the vibration of uniſons, every touch of moral beauty. Hence it is that a man of a ſocial heart, entendered by the practice of virtue, is awakened to the moſt pathetic emotions by every uncommon inſtance of generoſity, compaſſion, and greatneſs of ſoul. Is there any man ſo dead to ſentiment, ſo loſt

Digitized by Google

loſt to humanity, as to read unmoved the generous behaviour of the Romans to the States of Greece, as it is recounted by Livy, or embelliſhed by Thomſon in his Poem of Liberty? Speaking of Greece in the decline of her power, when her freedom no longer exiſted, he ſays:

As at her Iſthmian games, a fading pomp!
Her full-aſſembled youth innumerous ſwarm'd,
On a tribunal rais'd * FLAMINIUS ſat;
A victor he from the deep Phalanx piere'd
Of iron-coated Macedon, and back
The Grecian tyrant to his bounds repell'd.
In the high thoughtleſs gaiety of game,
While ſport alone their unambitious hearts
Poſſeſs'd; the ſudden trumpet ſounding hoarſe,
Bad ſilence o'er the bright aſſembly reign.
Then thus a herald---" to the ſtates of Greece
The Roman People, unconfin'd, reſtore
Their countries, cities, liberties, and laws;
Taxes remit, and garriſons withdraw."
The crowd, aſtoniſh'd half, and half inform'd,
Star'd dubious round; ſome queſtion'd, ſome exclaim'd
(Like one who dreaming, between hope and fear,
Is loſt in anxious joy) " Be that again
— Be that again proclaim'd diſtinct and loud!"
Loud and diſtinct it was again proclaim'd;
And ſtill as midnight in the rural ſhade,
When the gale ſlumbers, they the words devour'd.
Awhile ſevere amazement held them mute,
Then burſting broad, the boundleſs ſhout to heav'n
From many a thouſand hearts extatic ſprung!
On ev'ry hand rebellow'd to them joy;
The ſwelling ſea, the rocks and vocal hills—
—Like Bacchanals they flew,
Each other ſtraining in a ſtrict embrace,
Nor ſtrain'd a ſlave; and loud acclaims, 'till night,
Round the Proconſul's tent repeated rung.

To one acquainted with the Genius of Greece, the character and diſpoſition of that poliſhed people, admired for ſcience, renowned for an unextinguiſhable love of freedom, nothing can be more affecting than this inſtance of generous magnanimity of the Ro-

* His real name was QUINTUS FLAMINIUS.

man

Digitized by Google

man people, in reſtoring them unaſked to the full fruition of thoſe liberties, which they had ſo unfortunately loſt.

The mind of Senſibility is equally ſtruck by the generous confidence of Alexander, who drinks without heſitation the potion preſented by his phyſician Philip, even after he had received intimation that poiſon was contiained in the cup; a noble and pathetic ſcene! which hath acquired new dignity and expreſſion under the inimitable pencil of a Le Sueur. Humanity is melted into tears of tender admiration by the deportment of Henry IV. of France, while his rebellious ſubjects compelled him to form the blockade of his capital. In chaſtiſing his enemies, he could not but remember they were his people; and knowing they were reduced to the extremity of famine, he generouſly connived at the methods practiſed to ſupply them with proviſion. Chancing one day to meet two peaſants, who had been detected in theſe practices, as they were led to execution they implored his clemency, declaring in the ſight of Heaven, they had no other way to procure ſubſiſtence for their wives and children. He pardoned them on the ſpot, and giving them all the money that was in his purſe, "Henry of Bearne is poor (ſaid he); had he more money to afford, you ſhould have it—go home to your families in peace; and remember your duty to God, and your allegiance to your Sovereign." Innumerable examples of the ſame kind may be ſelected from hiſtory, both antient and modern, the ſtudy of which we would therefore ſtrenuouſly recommend.

Hiſtorical knowledge indeed becomes neceſſary on many other accounts, which in its place we will explain: but as the formation of the heart is of the firſt conſequence, and ſhould precede the cultivation of the underſtanding, ſuch ſtriking inſtances of ſuperior

Digitized by Google

ſuperior virtue ought to be culled for the peruſal of the young pupil, who will read them with eagerneſs, and revolve them with pleaſure. Thus the young mind becomes enamoured of moral beauty, and the paſſions are liſted on the ſide of humanity. Meanwhile knowledge of a different ſpecies will go hand in hand with the advances of morality, and the underſtanding be gradually extended. Virtue and ſentiment reciprocally aſſiſt each other, and both conduce to the improvement of perception. While the ſcholar's chief attention is employed in learning the Latin and Greek languages, and this is generally the taſk of childhood and early youth, it is even then the buſineſs of the Preceptor to give his mind a turn for obſervation, to direct his powers of diſcernment, to point out the diſtinguiſhing marks of character, and dwell upon the charms of moral and intellectual beauty, as they may chance to occur in the Claſſics that are uſed for his inſtruction. In reading Cornelius Nepos and Plutarch's Lives, even with a view to grammatical improvement only, he will inſenſibly imbibe and learn to compare ideas of greater importance. He will become enamoured of virtue and patriotiſm, and acquire a deteſtation for vice, cruelty, and corruption. The peruſal of the Roman ſtory in the works of Florus, Salluſt, Livy, and Tacitus, will irreſiſtibly engage his attention, expand his conception, cheriſh his memory, exerciſe his judgment, and warm him with a noble ſpirit of emulation. He will contemplate with love and admiration the diſintereſted candour of Ariſtides, ſurnamed the Juſt, whom the guilty cabals of his rival Themiſtocles exiled from his ungrateful country by a ſentence of Oſtraciſm. He will be ſurpriſed to learn, that one of his fellow-citizens, an illiterate artiſan, bribed by his enemies, chancing to meet him in the ſtreet without knowing his perſon, deſired he would write Ariſtides

Digitized by Google

Ariſtides on his ſhell (which was the method thoſe plebeians uſed to vote againſt delinquents), when the innocent patriot wrote his own name without complaint or expoſtulation. He will with equal aſtoniſhment applaud the inflexible integrity of Fabricius, who preferred the poverty of innocence to all the pomp of affluence, with which Pyrrhus endeavoured to ſeduce him from the arms of his country. He will approve with tranſport the noble generoſity of his ſoul in rejecting the propoſal of that Prince's phyſician, who offered to take him off by poiſon; and in ſending the caitiff bound to his ſovereign, whom he would have ſo baſely and cruelly betrayed.

In reading the antient authors, even for the purpoſes of ſchool education, the unformed taſte will begin to reliſh the irreſiſtible energy, greatneſs, and ſublimity of Homer, the ſerene majeſty, the melody, and pathos of Virgil, the tenderneſs of Sappho and Tibullus, the elegance and propriety of Terence; the grace, vivacity, ſatire, and ſentiment of Horace.

Nothing will more conduce to the improvement of the ſcholar in his knowledge of the languages, as well as in taſte and morality, than his being obliged to tranſlate choice parts and paſſages of the moſt approved Claſſics, both poetry and proſe, eſpecially the latter; ſuch as the orations of Demoſthenes and Iſocrates, the Treatiſe of Longinus on the Sublime, the Commentaries of Cæſar, the Epiſtles of Cicero and the Younger Pliny, and the two celebrated ſpeeches in the Catilinarian conſpiracy by Salluſt. By this practice he will become more intimate with the beauties of the writing and the idioms of the language, from which he tranſlates; at the ſame time it will form his ſtyle, and by exerciſing his talent of expreſſion make him a more perfect maſter of his mother tongue. Cicero tells us, that in tranſlating two orations, which the moſt celebrated orators of

Digitized by Google

Greece pronounced againſt each other, he performed this taſk not as a ſervile interpreter but as an orator, preſerving the ſentiments, forms, and figures of the original, but adapting the expreſſion to the taſte and manners of the Romans:—"*In quibus non verbum pro verbo neceſſe habui reddere, ſed genus omnium verborum vimque ſervavi*;" "in which I did not think it was neceſſary to tranſlate literally word for word, but I preſerved the natural and full ſcope of the whole." Of the ſame opinion was Horace, who ſays in his Art of Poetry,

Nec verbum verbo curabis reddere fidus
Interpres——

Nor word for word tranſlate with painful care——

Nevertheleſs, in taking the liberty here granted, we are apt to run into the other extreme, and ſubſtitute equivalent thoughts and phraſes, till hardly any features of the original remain. The metaphors of figures, eſpecially in poetry, ought to be as religiouſly preſerved as the images of painting, which we cannot alter or exchange without deſtroying, or injuring at leaſt, the character and ſtyle of the original.

In this manner the Preceptor will ſow the ſeeds of that taſte, which will ſoon germinate, riſe, bloſſom, and produce perfect fruit by dint of future care and cultivation. In order to reſtrain the luxuriancy of the young imagination, which is apt to run riot, to enlarge the ſtock of ideas, exerciſe the reaſon, and ripen the judgment, the pupil muſt be engaged in the ſeverer ſtudy of Science. He muſt learn Geometry, which Plato recommends for ſtrengthening the mind, and enabling it to think with preciſion. He muſt be made acquainted with Geography and Chronology, and trace Philoſophy through all her branches. Without Geography and Chronology he will not be able to acquire a diſtinct idea of Hiſtory; nor

Digitized by Google

hor judge of the propriety of many intereſting ſcenes, and a thouſand alluſions, that preſent themſelves in the works of Genius. Nothing opens the mind ſo much as the reſearches of Philoſophy; they inſpire us with ſublime conceptions of the Creator, and ſubject, as it were, all nature to our command. Theſe beſtow that liberal turn of thinking, and in a great meaſure contribute to that univerſality in learning, by which a man of taſte ought to be eminently diſtinguiſhed. But Hiſtory is the inexhauſtible ſource, from which he will derive his moſt uſeful knowledge reſpecting the progreſs of the human mind, the conſtitution of government, the riſe and decline of empires, the revolution of arts, the variety of character, and the viciſſitudes of fortune.

The knowledge of Hiſtory enables the Poet not only to paint characters, but alſo to deſcribe magnificent and intereſting ſcenes of battle and adventure. Not that the Poet or Painter ought to be reſtrained to the letter of hiſtorical truth. Hiſtory repreſents what has really happened in nature; the other arts exhibit what might have happened, with ſuch exaggeration of circumſtance and feature, as may be deemed an improvement on Nature: but this exaggeration muſt not be carried beyond the bounds of probability; and theſe, generally ſpeaking, the knowledge of Hiſtory will aſcertain. It would be extremely difficult, if not impoſſible, to find a man actually exiſting, whoſe proportions ſhould anſwer to thoſe of the Greek ſtatue, diſtinguiſhed by the name of the Apollo of Belvedere; or to produce a woman ſimilar in proportion of parts to the other celebrated piece called the Venus de Medicis; therefore it may be truly affirmed, that they are not conformable to the real ſtandard of nature: nevertheleſs every artiſt will own that they are the very archetypes of grace, elegance, and ſym-

Digitized by Google

metry; and every judging eye muſt behold them with admiration, as improvements on the lines and lineaments of nature. The truth is, the ſculptor or ſtatuary compoſed the various proportions in nature from a great number of different ſubjects, every individual of which he found imperfect or defective in ſome one particular, though beautiful in all the reſt; and from theſe obſervations, corroborated by taſte and judgment, he formed an ideal pattern, according to which his idea was modelled, and produced in execution.

Every body knows the ſtory of Zeuxis, the famous painter of Heraclea, who, according to Pliny, invented the *chiaro oſcuro*, or diſpoſition of light and ſhade, among the ancients, and excelled all his contemporaries in the chromatique, or art of colouring. This great artiſt being employed to draw a perfect beauty in the character of Helen, to be placed in the Temple of Juno, culled out five of the moſt beautiful damſels the city could produce, and ſelecting what was excellent in each, combined them in one picture according to the prediſpoſition of his fancy, ſo that it ſhone forth an amazing model of perfection *. In like manner every man of genius, regulated by true taſte, entertains in his imagination an ideal beauty, conceived and cultivated as an improvement upon nature: and this we refer to the article of invention.

It is the buſineſs of Art to imitate Nature, but not with a ſervile pencil; and to chuſe thoſe attitudes

* Præbete igitur mihi quæſo, inquit, ex iſtis virginibus formoſiſſimas, dum pingo id, quod pollicitus ſum vobis, ut mutum in ſimulacrum ex animali exemplo veritas transferatur.—Ille autem quinque delegit.—Neque enim putavit omnia, quæ quæreret ad venuſtatem, uno in corpore ſe reperire poſſe; ideo quod nihil ſimplici in genere omnibus ex partibus perfectum natura expolivit. Cic. Lib. 2. de Inv. cap. 1.

and

Digitized by Google

and diſpoſitions only, which are beautiful and engaging. With this view we muſt avoid all diſagreeable proſpects of Nature, which excite the ideas of abhorrence and diſguſt. For example, a painter would not find his account in exhibiting the reſemblance of a dead carcaſe half conſumed by vermin, or of ſwine wallowing in ordure, or of a beggar louſing himſelf on a dunghill, though theſe ſcenes ſhould be painted never ſo naturally, and all the world muſt allow that the ſcenes were taken from Nature, becauſe the merit of the imitation would be greatly over-balanced by the vile choice of the artiſt. There are nevertheleſs many ſcenes of horror, which pleaſe in the repreſentation, from a certain intereſting greatneſs, which we ſhall endeavour to explain, when we come to conſider the ſublime.

Were we to judge every production by the rigorous rules of Nature, we ſhould reject the Iliad of Homer, the Æneid of Virgil, and every celebrated tragedy of antiquity and the preſent times, becauſe there is no ſuch thing in Nature as an Hector or Turnus talking in hexameter, or an Othello in blank verſe: we ſhould condemn the Hercules of Sophocles, and the Miſer of Moliere, becauſe we never knew a hero ſo ſtrong as the one, or a wretch ſo foreſid as the other. But if we conſider Poetry as an elevation of natural dialogue, as a delightful vehicle for conveying the nobleſt ſentiments of heroiſm and patriot virtue, to regale the ſenſe with the ſounds of muſical expreſſion, while the fancy is raviſhed with enchanting images, and the heart warmed to rapture and extaſy, we muſt allow that Poetry is a perfection to which Nature would gladly aſpire; and that though it ſurpaſſes, it does not deviate from her, provided the characters are marked with propriety and ſuſtained with genius. Characters therefore, both in Poetry and Painting, may be a little overcharged or

Digitized by Google

exaggerated without offering violence to Nature; nay, they muſt be exaggerated in order to be ſtriking, and to preſerve the idea of imitation, whence the reader and ſpectator derive in many inſtances their chief delight. If we meet a common acquaintance in the ſtreet, we ſee him without emotion; but ſhould we chance to ſpy his portrait well executed, we are ſtruck with pleaſing admiration. In this caſe the pleaſure ariſes entirely from the imitation. We every day hear unmoved the natives of Ireland and Scotland ſpeaking their own dialects; but ſhould an Engliſhman mimic either, we are apt to burſt out into a loud laugh of applauſe, being ſurpriſed and tickled by the imitation alone; though at the ſame time, we cannot but allow that the imitation is imperfect. We are more affected by reading Shakeſpeare's deſcription of Dover Cliff, and Otway's picture of the Old Hag, than we ſhould be, were we actually placed on the ſummit of the one, or met in reality with ſuch a beldame as the other; becauſe in reading theſe deſcriptions we refer to our own experience, and perceive with ſurpriſe the juſtneſs of the imitations. But if it is ſo cloſe as to be miſtaken for Nature, the pleaſure then will ceaſe becauſe the μίμησις or imitation no longer appears.

Ariſtotle ſays, that all Poetry and Muſic is imitation*, whether epic, tragic, or comic, whether vocal or inſtrumental, from the pipe or the lyre. He obſerves, that in man there is a propenſity to imitate even from his infancy; that the firſt perceptions of the mind are acquired by imitation; and ſeems to think that the pleaſure derived from imitation is the gratification of an appetite implanted by Nature. We ſhould rather think the pleaſure it gives,

* Ἔτι ποιεῖται δὴ καὶ ἡ τῆς τραγῳδίας ποίησις, ἔτι δὲ κωμῳδία καὶ ἡ διθυραμβοποιητικὴ, καὶ τῆς αὐλήσεως ἡ πλείστη καὶ κιθαρίσεως, πᾶσαι τυγχάνουσιν οὖσαι μιμήσεις εἰς τὸ σύνολον.

ariſes

Digitized by Google

ariſes from the minds contemplating that excellency of art, which thus rivals Nature, and ſeems to vie with her in creating ſuch a ſtriking reſemblance of her works. Thus the arts may be juſtly termed imitative, even in the article of invention: for in forming a character, contriving an incident, and deſcribing a ſcene, he muſt ſtill keep Nature in view, and refer every particular of his invention to her ſtandard; otherwiſe his production will be deſtitute of truth and probability, without which the beauties of imitation cannot ſubſiſt. It will be a monſter of incongruity, ſuch as Horace alludes to, in the beginning of his Epiſtle to the Piſos:

Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam
Jungere ſi velit, & varias inducere plumas
Undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum
Deſinat in piſcem, mulier formoſa ſuperne;
Spectatum admiſſi riſum teneatis, amici?

Suppoſe a painter to a human head
Should join a horſe's neck, and wildly ſpread
The various plumage of the feather'd kind
O'er limbs of different beaſts abſurdly join'd;
Or if he gave to view a beauteous maid
Above the waiſt with every charm array'd;
Should a foul fiſh her lower parts unfold,
Would you not laugh ſuch pictures to behold?

The magazine of Nature ſupplies all thoſe images, which compoſe the moſt beautiful imitations. This the artiſt examines occaſionally, as he would conſult a collection of maſterly ſketches; and ſelecting particulars for his purpoſe, mingles the ideas with a kind of enthuſiaſm, or τὸ θεῖον, which is that gift of Heaven we call Genius, and finally produces ſuch a whole, as commands admiration and applauſe.

Digitized by Google

ESSAY XIV.

THE ſtudy of Polite Literature is generally ſuppoſed to include all the Liberal Arts of Poetry, Painting, Sculpture, Muſic, Eloquence, and Architecture. All theſe are founded on imitation; and all of them mutually aſſiſt and illuſtrate each other. But as Painting, Sculpture, Muſic, and Architecture, cannot be perfectly attained without long practice of manual operation, we ſhall diſtinguiſh them from Poetry and Eloquence, which depend entirely on the faculties of the mind; and on theſe laſt, as on the Arts, which immediately conſtitute the Belles Lettres, employ our attention in the preſent enquiry: or, if it ſhould run to a greater length than we propoſe, it ſhall be confined to Poetry alone; a ſubject that comprehends in its full extent the province of Taſte, or what is called Polite Literature; and differs eſſentially from Eloquence, both in its end and origin.

Poetry ſprang from eaſe, and was conſecrated to pleaſure; whereas Eloquence aroſe from neceſſity, and aims at conviction. When we ſay Poetry ſprang from eaſe, perhaps we ought to except that ſpecies of it, which owed its riſe to inſpiration and enthuſiaſm, and properly belonged to the culture of Religion. In the firſt ages of mankind, and even in the original ſtate of Nature, the unlettered mind muſt have been ſtruck with ſublime conceptions, with admiration and awe, by thoſe great phænomena, which, though every day repeated, can never be viewed without internal emotion. Thoſe would break forth in exclamations expreſſive of the paſſion produced, whether ſurpriſe or gratitude, terror or exultation.

The

Digitized by Google

The riſing, the apparent courſe, the ſetting, and ſeeming renovation of the ſun; the revolution of light and darkneſs; the ſplendour, change, and circuit of the moon, and the canopy of Heaven beſpangled with ſtars, muſt have produced expreſſions of wonder and adoration. "O glorious luminary! great eye of the world! ſource of that light which guides my ſteps! of that heat which warms me when chilled with cold! of that influence which cheers the face of Nature! whither doſt thou retire every evening with the ſhades? Whence doſt thou ſpring every morning with renovated luſtre, and never-fading glory? Art not thou the ruler, the creator, the God, of all that I behold? I adore thee, as thy child, thy ſlave, thy ſuppliant! I crave thy protection, and the continuance of thy goodneſs! Leave me not to periſh with cold, or to wander ſolitary in utter darkneſs! Return, return, after thy wonted abſence: drive before thee the gloomy clouds, that would obſcure the face of Nature. The birds begin to warble, and every animal is filled with gladneſs at thy approach: even the trees, the herbs, and the flowers, ſeem to rejoice with freſher beauties, and ſend forth a grateful incenſe to thy power, whence their origin is derived!" A number of individuals, inſpired with the ſame ideas, would join in theſe oriſons, which would be accompanied with correſponding geſticulations of the body. They would be improved by practice, and grow regular from repetition. The ſounds and geſtures would naturally fall into meaſured cadence. Thus the ſong and dance will be produced; and a ſyſtem of worſhip being formed, the Muſe would be conſecrated to the purpoſes of Religion.

Hence thoſe forms of thankſgivings, and litanies of ſupplication, with which the religious rites of all nations, even the moſt barbarous, are at this day celebrated in every quarter of the known world. In-

Digitized by Google

deed this is a circumſtance, in which all nations ſurpriſingly agree, how much ſoever they may differ in every other article of laws, cuſtoms, manners, and religion. The antient Egyptians celebrated the feſtivals of their god Apis with hymns and dances. The ſuperſtition of the Greeks, partly derived from the Egyptians, abounded with poetical ceremonies, ſuch as choruſes and hymns, ſung and danced at their apotheoſes, ſacrifices, games, and divinations. The Romans had their *carmen ſeculare*, and Salian prieſts, who on certain feſtivals ſung and danced through the ſtreets of Rome. The Iſraelites were famous for this kind of exultation: "And Miriam the propheteſs, the ſiſter of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her, with timbrels and with dances, and Miriam anſwered them, Sing ye to the Lord, &c."—"And David danced before the Lord with all his might."—The pſalms compoſed by this monarch, the ſongs of Deborah and Iſaiah, are farther confirmations of what we have advanced.

From the Phœnicians the Greeks borrowed the curſed Orthyan ſong, when they ſacrificed their children to Diana. The Poetry of the Bards conſtituted great part of the religious ceremonies among the Gauls and Britons; and the carouſals of the Goths were religious inſtitutions, celebrated with ſongs of triumph. The Mahometan Derviſe dances to the ſound of the flute, and whirls himſelf round until he grows giddy, and falls into a trance. The Marabous compoſe hymns in praiſe of Allah. The Chineſe celebrate their grand feſtivals with proceſſions of idols, ſongs, and inſtrumental muſic. The Tartars, Samoiedes, Laplanders, Negroes, even the Caffres called Hottentots, ſolemnize their worſhip (ſuch as it is) with ſongs and dancing; ſo that we may venture to ſay, Poetry is the univerſal vehicle, in which all

Digitized by Google

all nations have expreſſed their moſt ſublime conceptions.

Poetry was in all appearance previous to any concerted plan of worſhip, and to every eſtabliſhed ſyſtem of legiſlation. When certain individuals, by dint of ſuperior proweſs or underſtanding, had acquired the veneration of their fellow ſavages, and erected themſelves into divinities on the ignorance and ſuperſtition of mankind; then mythology took place, and ſuch a ſwarm of deities aroſe, as produced a religion replete with the moſt ſhocking abſurdities. Thoſe, whom their ſuperior talents had deified, were found to be ſtill actuated by the moſt brutal paſſions of human nature; and in all probability their votaries were glad to find ſuch examples, to countenance their own vicious inclinations. Thus fornication, inceſt, rape, and even beſtiality, were ſanctified by the amours of Jupiter, Pan, Mars, Venus, and Apollo. Theft was patronized by Mercury; drunkenneſs by Bacchus; and cruelty by Diana. The ſame heroes and legiſlators, thoſe who delivered their country, founded cities, eſtabliſhed ſocieties, invented uſeful arts, or contributed in any eminent degree to the ſecurity and happineſs of their fellow-creatures, were inſpired by the ſame luſts and appetites, which domineered among the inferior claſſes of mankind; therefore every vice incident to human nature was celebrated in the worſhip of one or other of theſe divinities; and every infirmity conſecrated by public feaſt and ſolemn ſacrifice. In theſe inſtitutions the Poet bore a principal ſhare. It was his genius that contrived the plan, that executed the form of worſhip, and recorded in verſe the origin and adventures of their gods and demi-gods. Hence the impurities and horrors of certain rites; the groves of Paphos and Baal-Peor; the orgies of Bacchus; the human ſacrifices to Moloch and Diana. Hence the

Digitized by Google

the theogony of Heſiod; the theology of Homer; and thoſe innumerable maxims ſcattered through the antient Poets, inviting mankind to gratify their ſenſual appetites, in imitation of the gods, who were certainly the beſt judges of happineſs. It is well known, that Plato expelled Homer from his commonwealth, on account of the infamous characters, by which he has diſtinguiſhed his deities; as well as for ſome depraved ſentiments which he found diffuſed through the courſe of the Iliad and Odyſſey. Cicero enters into the ſpirit of Plato, and exclaims, in his firſt book "De Natura Deorum," *Nec multa abſurdiora ſunt ea, quæ, poetarum vocibus fuſa, ipſa ſuavitate nocuerunt: qui, & ira inflammatos, & libidine furentes, induxerunt Deos, feceruntque ut eorum bella, pugnas, prælia, vulnera videremus: odia præterea, diſſidia, diſcordias, ortus, interritus, querelas, lamentationes, effuſas in omni intemperantiâ libidines, adulteria, vincula, cum humano genere concubitus, mortaleſque ex immortali procreatos.* "Nor are thoſe things much more abſurd which, flowing from the Poet's tongue, have done miſchief even by the ſweetneſs of his expreſſion. The Poets have introduced gods inflamed with anger and enraged with luſt; and even produced before our eyes their wars, their wrangling, their duels, and their wounds. They have expoſed beſides, their antipathies, animoſities, and diſſentions; their origin and death; their complaints and lamentations; their appetites, indulged to all manner of exceſs, their adulteries, their fetters, their amorous commerce with the human ſpecies; and from immortal parents derived a mortal offspring."

As the feſtivals of the gods neceſſarily produced good cheer, which often carried to riot and debauchery, mirth of conſequence prevailed; and this was always attended with buffoonery. Taunts and jokes, and raillery and repartee, would neceſſarily enſue;

Digitized by Google

ſue; and individuals would contend for the victory in wit and genius. Theſe conteſts would in time be reduced to ſome regulations, for the entertainment of the people thus aſſembled, and ſome prize would be decreed to him who was judged to excel his rivals. The candidates for fame and profit being thus ſtimulated, would taſk their talents, and naturally recommend theſe alternate recriminations to the audience, by clothing them with a kind of poetical meaſure, which ſhould bear a near reſemblance to proſe. Thus, as the ſolemn ſervice of the day was compoſed in the moſt ſublime ſpecies of Poetry, ſuch as the ode or hymn, the ſubſequent altercation was carried on in Iambics, and gave riſe to Satire. We are told by the Stagirite, that the higheſt ſpecies of Poetry was employed in celebrating great actions; but the humbler ſort uſed in this kind of contention*; and that in the ages of antiquity there were ſome bards that profeſſed Heroics, and ſome that pretended to Iambics only.

Οἱ μὲν ἡρωϊκῶν, οἱ δὲ ἰάμβων ποιηται.

To theſe rude beginnings we not only owe the birth of Satire, but likewiſe the origin of Dramatic Poetry. Tragedy herſelf, which afterwards attained to ſuch dignity as to rival the Epic Muſe, was at firſt no other than a trial of Crambo, or Iambics, between two peaſants, and a goat was the prize, as Horace calls it, *vile certamen ob hircum*; "a mean conteſt for a he-goat." Hence the name τραγωδία, ſignifying the goat-ſong, from τράγος *hircus*, and ᾠδὴ *carmen*.

Carmine qui tragico vilem certavit ob hircum,
Mox etiam agreſtes ſatyros nudavit, & aſper
Incolumi gravitate jocum tentavit, eo quod
Illecebris erat & gratâ novitate morandus
Spectator, functuſque ſacris, & potus & exlex. HOR.

* Οἱ μὲν γὰρ σεμνότεροι, τὰς καλὰς ἐμιμοῦντο πράξεις ——οἱ δὲ εὐτελέστεροι, τὰς τῶν φαύλων, πρῶτον λόγους ποιοῦντες.

The

The tragic bard, a goat his humble prize,
Bade ſatyrs naked and uncouth ariſe;
His muſe ſevere, ſecure and undiſmay'd,
The ruſtic joke in ſolemn ſtrain convey'd;
For novelty alone he knew could charm
A lawleſs crowd, with wine and feaſting warm.

Satire then was originally a clowniſh dialogue in looſe Iambics, ſo called becauſe the actors were diſguiſed like ſatyrs, who not only recited the praiſes of Bacchus, or ſome other deity, but interſperſed their hymns with ſarcaſtic jokes and altercation. Of this kind is the *Cyclop* of Euripides, in which Ulyſſes is the principal actor. The Romans alſo had their *Atellanæ* or interludes of the ſame nature, ſo called from the city of *Atella*, where they were firſt acted: but theſe were highly poliſhed in compariſon of the original entertainment, which was altogether rude and innocent. Indeed the *Cyclop* itſelf, though compoſed by the accompliſhed Euripides, abounds with ſuch impurity, as ought not to appear on the ſtage of any civilized nation.

It is very remarkable that the *Atellanæ*, which were in effect tragi-comedies, grew into ſuch eſteem among the Romans, that the performers in theſe pieces enjoyed ſeveral privileges, which were refuſed to the ordinary actors. They were not obliged to unmaſk, like the other players, when their action was diſagreeable to the audience. They were admitted into the army, and enjoyed the privileges of free citizens, without incurring that diſgrace, which was affixed to the characters of other actors *. The poet Laberius, who was of equeſtrian order, being preſſed by Julius Cæſar to act a part in his own per-

* Cum artem ludicram, ſcenamque totam probro ducerent, genus id hominum non modo honore civium reliquorum carere, ſed etiam tribu moveri notatione cenſoria voluerunt.
Cic. apud S. Aug. de Civit. Dei.

formance,

Digitized by Google

formance, complied with great reluctance, and complained of the diſhonour he had incurred, in his prologue preſerved by Macrobius, which is one of the moſt elegant morſels of antiquity.

Tragedy and Comedy flowed from the ſame fountain, though their ſtreams were ſoon divided. The ſame entertainment which, under the name of *Tragedy*, was rudely exhibited by clowns, for the prize of a goat, near ſome rural altar of Bacchus, aſſumed the appellation of *Comedy* when it was tranſferred into cities, and repreſented with a little more decorum in a cart or waggon, that ſtrolled from ſtreet to ſtreet, as the name κωμῳδία implies, being derived from κώμη a ſtreet, and ᾠδὴ a poem. To this origin Horace alludes in theſe lines:

Dicitur & plauſtris vexiſſe poemata Theſpis,
Quæ canerent agerentque peruncti fœcibus ora.

Theſpis, inventor of Dramatic art,
Convey'd his vagrant actors in a cart:
High o'er the crowd the mimic tribe appear'd,
And play'd and ſung, with lees of wine beſmear'd.

Theſpis is called the inventor of the Dramatic Art, becauſe he raiſed the ſubject from clowniſh altercation to the character and exploits of ſome hero: he improved the language and verſification, and relieved the Chorus by the dialogue of two actors. This was the firſt advance towards that conſummation of Genius and Art, which conſtitutes what is now called a perfect Tragedy. The next great improver was Æſchylus, of whom the ſame critic ſays,

Poſt hunc perſonæ pallæque repertor honeſtæ
Æſchylus, & modicis inſtravit pulpita tignis;
Et docuit magnumque loqui, nitique cothurno.

Then Æſchylus a decent vizard us'd;
Built a low ſtage; the flowing robe diffus'd:

In

In language more ſublime two actors rage,
And in the graceful buſkin tread the ſtage.

The dialogue which Theſpis introduced was called the *Epiſode*, becauſe it was an addition to the former ſubject, namely, the praiſes of Bacchus; ſo that now Tragedy conſiſted of two diſtinct parts, independent of each other; the old *Recitative*, which was the *Chorus*, ſung in honour of the gods; and the *Epiſode*, which turned upon the adventures of ſome hero. This Epiſode being found very agreeable to the people, Æſchylus, who lived about half a century after Theſpis, ſtill improved the drama, united the chorus to the epiſode ſo as to make them both parts or members of one fable, multiplied the actors, contrived the ſtage, and introduced the decorations of the theatre; ſo that Sophocles, who ſucceeded Æſchylus, had but one ſtep to ſurmount, in order to bring the drama to perfection. Thus Tragedy was gradually detached from its original inſtitution, which was entirely religious. The prieſts of Bacchus loudly complained of this innovation by means of the Epiſode, which was foreign to the intention of the Chorus; and hence aroſe the proverb of *Nihil ad Dionyſium*, "nothing to the purpoſe." Plutarch himſelf mentions the Epiſode as a perverſion of Tragedy, from the honour of the Gods to the paſſions of men: but notwithſtanding all oppoſition the new Tragedy ſucceeded to admiration; becauſe it was found the moſt pleaſing vehicle of conveying moral truths, of meliorating the heart, and extending the intereſts of humanity.

Comedy, according to Ariſtotle, is the younger ſiſter of Tragedy. As the firſt originally turned upon the praiſes of the gods, the latter dwelt on the follies and vices of mankind. Such, we mean, was the ſcope of that ſpecies of Poetry which acquired the

Digitized by Google

the name of Comedy, in contradiction to the Tragic Muſe: for in the beginning they were the ſame. The foundation, upon which Comedy was built, we have already explained to be the practice of ſatirical repartee or altercation, in which individuals expoſed the follies and frailties of each other on public occaſions of worſhip and feſtivity.

The firſt regular plan of Comedy is ſaid to have been the *Margites* of Homer, expoſing the idleneſs and folly of a worthleſs character; but of this performance we have no remains. That diviſion, which is termed the *Antient Comedy*, belongs to the labours of Eupolis, Cratinus, and Ariſtophanes; who were contemporaries, and flouriſhed at Athens about four hundred and thirty years before the Chriſtian æra. Such was the licence of the Muſe at this period, that, far from laſhing vice in general characters, ſhe boldly exhibited the exact portrait of every individual, who had rendered himſelf remarkable or notorious by his crimes, folly, or debauchery. She aſſumed every circumſtance of his external appearance, his very attire, air, manner, and even his name; according to the obſervation of Horace,

——————————— *Poetæ*
——— *quorum Comœdia priſca virorum eſt:*
Si quis erat dignus deſcribi, quod malus, aut fur,
Quod mœchus foret, aut ſicarius, aut alioqui
Famoſus, multa cum libertate notabant.

The Comic Poets, in its earlieſt age,
Who formed the manners of the Grecian ſtage—
Was there a villain who might juſtly claim
A better right of being damn'd to fame,
Rake, cut-throat, thief, whatever was his crime,
They boldly ſtigmatis'd the wretch in rhime.

Eupolis is ſaid to have ſatirized Alcibiades in this manner, and to have fallen a ſacrifice to the reſentment of that powerful Athenian: but others ſay he was drowned in the Helleſpont, during a war againſt

Digitized by Google

the Lacedemonians; and that in conſequence of this accident the Athenians paſſed a decree, that no Poet ſhould ever bear arms.

The Comedies of Cratinus are recommended by Quintilian for their eloquence; and Plutarch tells us, that even Pericles himſelf could not eſcape the cenſure of this Poet.

Ariſtophanes, of whom there are eleven Comedies ſtill extant, enjoyed ſuch a pre-eminence of reputation, that the Athenians by a public decree honoured him with a crown made of a conſecrated olive-tree, which grew in the citadel, for his care and ſucceſs in detecting and expoſing the vices of thoſe, who governed the commonwealth. Yet this Poet, whether impelled by mere wantonneſs of genius, or actuated by malice and envy, could not refrain from employing the ſhafts of his ridicule againſt Socrates, the moſt venerable character of Pagan antiquity. In the Comedy of The Clouds, this virtuous Philoſopher was exhibited on the ſtage under his own name, in a cloak exactly reſembling that which Socrates wore, in a maſk modelled from his features, diſputing publickly on the nature of right and wrong. This was undoubtedly an inſtance of the moſt flagrant licentiouſneſs; and what renders it the more extraordinary, the audience received it with great applauſe, even while Socrates himſelf ſat publickly in the theatre. The truth is, the Athenians were ſo fond of ridicule, that they reliſhed it even when employed againſt the gods themſelves, ſome of whoſe characters were very roughly handled by Ariſtophanes and his rivals in reputation.

We might here draw a parallel between the inhabitants of Athens and the natives of England, in point of conſtitution, genius, and diſpoſition. Athens was a free ſtate like England, that piqued itſelf upon the influence of the democracy. Like England, its wealth

Digitized by Google

wealth and ſtrength depended upon its maritime power; and it generally acted as umpire in the diſputes that aroſe among its neighbours. The people of Athens, like thoſe of England, were remarkably ingenious, and made great progreſs in the Arts and Sciences. They excelled in Poetry, Hiſtory, Philoſophy, Mechanics, and Manufactures; they were acute, diſcerning, diſputatious, fickle, wavering, raſh, and combuſtible, and, above all other nations in Europe, addicted to ridicule; a character which the Engliſh inherit in a very remarkable degree.

If we may judge from the writings of Ariſtophanes, his chief aim was to gratify the ſpleen and excite the mirth of his audience; of an audience too, that would ſeem to have been uninformed by Taſte, and altogether ignorant of decorum; for his pieces are replete with the moſt extravagant abſurdities, virulent ſlander, impiety, impurities, and low buffoonery. The Comic Muſe, not contented with being allowed to make free with the gods and philoſophers, applied her ſcourge ſo ſeverely to the magiſtrates of the commonwealth, that it was thought proper to reſtrain her within bounds by a law, enacting, that no perſon ſhould be ſtigmatiſed under his real name; and thus the Chorus was ſilenced. In order to elude the penalty of this law, and gratify the taſte of the people, the Poets began to ſubſtitute fictitious names, under which they exhibited particular characters in ſuch lively colours, that the reſemblance could not poſſibly be miſtaken or overlooked. This practice gave riſe to what is called the *Middle Comedy*, which was but of ſhort duration: for the legiſlature, perceiving that the firſt law had not removed the grievance, againſt which it was provided, iſſued a ſecond ordinance forbidding, under ſevere penalties, any real or family-occurrences to be repreſented. This reſtriction was the immediate

Digitized by Google

cauſe of improving Comedy into a general mirror, held forth to reflect the various follies and foibles incident to Human Nature; a ſpecies of writing called the *New Comedy*, introduced by Diphilus and Menander, of whoſe works nothing but a few fragments remain.

ESSAY XV.

HAVING communicated our ſentiments touching the origin of Poetry, by tracing Tragedy and Comedy to their common ſource, we ſhall now endeavour to point out the criteria, by which Poetry is diſtinguiſhed from every other ſpecies of writing. In common with other arts, ſuch as Statuary and Painting, it comprehends imitation, invention, compoſition, and enthuſiaſm. Imitation is indeed the baſis of all the liberal arts: invention and enthuſiaſm conſtitute Genius, in whatever manner it may be diſplayed. Eloquence of all ſorts admits of Enthuſiaſm. Tully ſays, an orator ſhould be *vehemens ut procella, excitatus ut torrens, incenſus ut fulmen; tonat, fulgurat, et rapidis Eloquentiæ fluctibus cuncta proruit et proturbat.* "Violent as a tempeſt, impetuous as a torrent, and glowing intenſe like the red bolt of heaven, he thunders, lightens, overthrows, and bears down all before him, by the irreſiſtible tide of Eloquence." This is the *mens divinior atque os magna ſonaturum* of Horace. This is the talent,

> *——Meum qui pectus inaniter angit,*
> *Irritat, mulcet, falſis terroribus implet,*
> *Ut magus.*

With

Digitized by Google

With paſſions not my own who fires my heart;
Who with unreal terrors fills my breaſt,
As with a magic influence poſſeſs'd.

We are told, that Michael Angelo Buonaroti uſed to work at his ſtatues in a fit of enthuſiaſm, during which he made the fragments of the ſtone fly about him with ſurpriſing violence. The celebrated Lully being one day blamed for ſetting nothing to muſic but the languid verſes of Quinault, was animated with the reproach, and running in a fit of enthuſiaſm to his harpſichord, ſung in recitative and accompanied four pathetic lines from the Iphigenia of Racine with ſuch expreſſion, as filled the hearers with aſtoniſhment and horror.

Though Verſification be one of the criteria that diſtinguiſh Poetry from Proſe, yet it is not the ſole mark of diſtinction. Were the Hiſtories of Polybius and Livy ſimply turned into verſe, they would not become Poems; becauſe they would be deſtitute of thoſe figures, embelliſhments, and flights of imagination, which diſplay the Poet's Art and Invention. On the other hand, we have many productions that juſtly lay claim to the title of Poetry, without having the advantage of verſification; witneſs the Pſalms of David, the Song of Solomon, with many beautiful hymns, deſcriptions, and rhapſodies, to be found in different parts of the Old Teſtament; ſome of them the immediate production of divine inſpiration: witneſs the Celtic fragments, which have lately appeared in the Engliſh language, and are certainly replete with poetical merit. But though good verſification alone will not conſtitute Poetry, bad verſification alone will certainly degrade and render diſguſtful the ſublimeſt ſentiments and fineſt flowers of imagination. This humiliating power of bad verſe appears in many tranſlations of the antient poets; in Ogilby's Homer, Trapp's Vir-

Digitized by Google

gil, and frequently in Creech's Horace. This laſt indeed is not wholly devoid of ſpirit, but it ſeldom riſes above mediocrity; and as Horace ſays,

——*Mediocribus eſſe poetis*
Non homines, non Di, non conceſſere columnæ.

But God and man and letter'd poſt denies
That Poets ever are of middling ſize.

How is that beautiful Ode, beginning with "*Juſtum & tenacem propoſiti virum*," chilled and tamed by the following tranſlation:

He who by principle is ſway'd,
In truth and juſtice ſtill the ſame,
Is neither of the crowd afraid,
Tho' civil broils the ſtate inflame;
Nor to a haughty tyrant's frown will ſtoop,
Nor to a raging ſtorm, when all the winds are up.

Should Nature with convulſions ſhake,
Struck with the fiery bolts of Jove,
The final doom and dreadful crack
Cannot his conſtant courage move.

That long Alexandrine—"Nor to a raging ſtorm, when all the winds are up," is drawling, feeble, ſwoln with a pleonaſm or tautology, as well as deficient in the rhyme; and as for "the dreadful crack" in the next ſtanza, inſtead of exciting terror, it conveys a low and ludicrous idea. How much more elegant and energetic is this paraphaſe of the ſame Ode, inſerted in one of the volumes of Hume's Hiſtory of England!

The man whoſe mind, on virtue bent,
Purſues ſome greatly good intent
With undiverted aim,
Serene beholds the angry crowd;
Nor can their clamours fierce and loud
His ſtubborn honour tame.

Nor the proud tyrant's fierceſt threat,
Nor ſtorms that from their dark retreat

The

The lawleſs ſurges wake;
Nor Jove's dread bolt that ſhakes the pole
The firmer purpoſe of his ſoul
With all its power can ſhake.

Should Nature's frame in ruins fall,
And Chaos o'er the ſinking ball
Reſume primæval ſway,
His courage Chance and Fate defies,
Nor feels the wreck of earth and ſkies
Obſtruct its deſtin'd way.

If Poetry exiſts independent of verſification, it will naturally be aſked, how then is it to be diſtinguiſhed? Undoubtedly by its own peculiar expreſſion: it has a language of its own, which ſpeaks ſo feelingly to the heart, and ſo pleaſingly to the imagination, that its meaning cannot poſſibly be miſunderſtood by any perſon of delicate ſenſations. It is a ſpecies of painting with words, in which the figures are happily conceived, ingeniouſly arranged, affectingly expreſſed, and recommended with all the warmth and harmony of colouring: it conſiſts of imagery, deſcription, metaphors, ſimiles, and ſentiments, adapted with propriety to the ſubject, ſo contrived and executed as to ſooth the ear, ſurpriſe and delight the fancy, mend and melt the heart, elevate the mind, and pleaſe the underſtanding. According to Flaccus:

Aut prodeſſe volunt, aut delectare poetæ;
Aut ſimul & jucunda & idonea dicere vitæ.

Poets would profit or delight mankind,
And with th'amuſing ſhow th' inſtructive join'd.

Omne tulit punctum, qui miſcuit utile dulci,
Lectorem delectando, pariterque monendo.

Profit and pleaſure mingled thus with art
To ſooth the fancy and improve the heart.—

Trophies and figures are likewiſe liberally uſed in Rhetoric; and ſome of the moſt celebrated orators have owned themſelves much indebted to the Poets.

Digitized by Google

Theophraſtus expreſſly recommends the Poets for this purpoſe. From their ſource the ſpirit and energy, the pathetic, the ſublime, and the beautiful, are derived *. But theſe figures muſt be more ſparingly uſed in Rhetoric than in Poetry, and even then mingled with argumentation, and a detail of facts altogether different from poetical narration. The Poet, inſtead of ſimply relating the incident, ſtrikes off a glowing picture of the ſcene, and exhibits it in the moſt lively colours to the eye of the imagination. "It is reported that Homer was blind (ſays Tully in his Tuſculan Queſtions), yet his Poetry is no other than Painting. What country, what climate, what ideas, battles, commotions, and conteſts of men, as well as of wild beaſts, has he not painted in ſuch a manner as to bring before our eyes thoſe very ſcenes, which he himſelf could not behold †!" We cannot therefore ſubſcribe to the opinion of ſome ingenious critics, who have blamed Mr. Pope for deviating in ſome inſtances from the ſimplicity of Homer, in his tranſlation of the Iliad and Odyſſey. For example, the Grecian bard ſays ſimply, the ſun roſe; and his Tranſlator gives us a beautiful picture of the ſun riſing. Homer mentions a perſon who played upon the lyre; the Tranſlator ſets him before us warbling to the ſilver ſtrings. If this be a deviation, it is at the ſame time an improvement. Homer himſelf, as Cicero obſerves above, is full of this kind of painting, and particularly fond of deſcription, even in ſituations where the action ſeems to require haſte. Neptune, obſerving

* Namque ab his (ſcilicet poetis) et in rebus ſpiritus, et in verbis ſublimitas, et in affectibus motus omnis, et in perſonis decor petitur. QUINTILIAN, l. x.

† Quæ regio, quæ ora, quæ ſpecies formæ, quæ pugna, qui malus hominum, qui ferarum, non ita expictus eſt, ut quæ ipſe non viderit, nos ut videremus, effecerit!

from

Digitized by Google

from Samothrace the diſcomfiture of the Grecians before Troy, flies to their aſſiſtance, and might have been wafted thither in half a line: but the bard deſcribes him, firſt, deſcending the mountain on which he ſat; ſecondly, ſtriding towards his palace at Ægæ, and yoking his horſes; thirdly, he deſcribes him putting on his armour; and laſtly, aſcending his car, and driving along the ſurface of the ſea. Far from being diſguſted by theſe delays, we are delighted with the particulars of the deſcription. Nothing can be more ſublime than the circumſtance of the mountain's trembling beneath the footſteps of an immortal:

—— Τρέμι δ' ὄρεα μακρὰ καὶ ὕλη
Ποσσὶν ὑπ' ἀθανάτοισι Ποσειδάωνος ἰόντος.

But his paſſage to the Grecian fleet is altogether tranſporting.

Βῆ δ' ἰλάων ἐπὶ κύματ' &c

He mounts the car, the golden ſcourge applies,
He ſits ſuperior, and the chariot flies;
His whirling wheels the glaſſy ſurface ſweep:
Th' enormous monſters, rolling o'er the deep,
Gambol around him on the watery way,
And heavy whales in aukward meaſures play:
The ſea ſubſiding ſpreads a level plain,
Exults and crowns the monarch of the main;
The parting waves before his courſers fly;
The wand'ring waters leave his axle dry.—

With great veneration for the memory of Mr. Pope, we cannot help objecting to ſome lines of this tranſlation. We have no idea of the ſea's exulting and crowning Neptune, after it had ſubſided into a level plain. There is no ſuch image in the original. Homer ſays, the whales exulted, and knew or owned their king; and that the ſea parted with joy: γηθοσύνη δὲ θάλασσα διίζατο. Neither is there a word of the wondering waters: we therefore think the lines might be thus altered to advantage.

They

Digitized by Google

They knew and own'd the monarch of the main:
The ſea ſubſiding ſpreads a level plain:
The curling waves before his courſers fly:
The parting ſurface leaves his brazen axle dry.

Beſides the metaphors, ſimiles, and alluſions of Poetry, there is an infinite variety of tropes, or turns of expreſſion, occaſionally diſſeminated through works of Genius, which ſerve to animate the whole, and diſtinguiſh the glowing effuſions of real inſpiration from the cold efforts of mere ſcience. Theſe tropes conſiſt of a certain happy choice and arrangement of words, by which ideas are artfully diſcloſed in a great variety of attitudes; of epithets, and compound epithets; of ſounds collected in order to echo the ſenſe conveyed; of apoſtrophes; and above all, the enchanting uſe of the proſopopœia, which is a kind of magic, by which the Poet gives life and motion to every inanimate part of Nature. Homer, deſcribing the wrath of Agamemnon, in the firſt book of the Iliad, ſtrikes off a glowing image in two words:

——ὅσσε δ' οἱ πυρὶ λαμπετόωνι ἐΐκτην.

—And from his eye-balls *flaſh'd the living fire.*

This indeed is a figure, which has been copied by Virgil, and almoſt all the Poets of every age—*oculis* micat *acribus ignis*—igneſcunt iræ: *auris dolor oſſibus* ardet. Milton deſcribing Satan in Hell, ſays,

With head uplift above the wave, and eye
That *ſparkling blaz'd!*—

—He ſpake: and to confirm his words outflew
Millions of flaming ſwords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty cherubims. The ſudden *blaze*
Far round *illumin'd* Hell—

There are certain words in every language particularly adapted to the poetical expreſſion; ſome from the image or idea they convey to the imagination; and ſome from the effect they have upon the ear.

The

Digitized by Google

The firſt are truly *figurative*; the others may be called *emphatical.*—Rollin obſerves, that Virgil has upon many occaſions poetized (if we may allowed the expreſſion) a whole ſentence by means of the ſame word, which is *pendere.*

Ite meæ, felix quondam pecus, ite capellæ.
Non ego vos poſthac, viridi projectus in antro,
Dumoſa pendere procul de rupe videbo.

At eaſe reclin'd beneath the verdant ſhade,
No more ſhall I behold my happy flock
Aloft *hang* brouzing on the tufted rock.

Here the word *pendere* wonderfully improves the landſcape, and renders the whole paſſage beautifully pictureſque. The ſame figurative verb we meet with in many different parts of the Æneid.

Hi ſummo in fluctu pendent, *his unda* dehiſcens
Terram inter fluctus aperit.

Theſe on the mountain billow *hung*; to thoſe
The *yawning waves* the yellow ſand diſcloſe.

In this inſtance, the words *pendent* and *dehiſcens*, *hung* and *yawning*, are equally poetical. Addiſon ſeems to have had this paſſage in his eye, when he wrote his Hymn, which is inſerted in the Spectator:

—For though in dreadful worlds we *hung*,
High on the broken wave.

And in another piece of a like nature, in the ſame collection:

Thy Providence my life ſuſtain'd
And all my wants redreſs'd,
When in the ſilent womb I lay,
And *hung* upon the breaſt.

Shakeſpeare, in his admired deſcription of Dover cliff, uſes the ſame expreſſion:

—half way down
Hangs one that gathers ſamphire, dreadful trade!

Nothing

Nothing can be more beautiful than the following picture, in which Milton has introduced the ſame expreſſive tint:

—he, on his ſide
Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd——

We ſhall give one example more from Virgil, to ſhow in what a variety of ſcenes it may appear with propriety and effect. In deſcribing the progreſs of Dido's paſſion for Æneas, the Poet ſays,

Iliacos iterum demens audire labores
Expoſcit, pendetque *iterum narrantis ab ore.*

The woes of Troy once more ſhe begg'd to hear;
Once more the mournful tale employ'd his tongue,
While in fond rapture on his lips ſhe *hung.*

The reader will perceive in all theſe inſtances that no other word could be ſubſtituted with equal energy; indeed no other word could be uſed without degrading the ſenſe, and defacing the image.

There are many other verbs of poetical import fetched from Nature, and from Art, which the Poet uſes to advantage both in a literal and metaphorical ſenſe; and theſe have been always tranſlated for the ſame purpoſe from one language to another; ſuch as *quaſſo, concutio, cio, ſuſcito, lenio, ſævio, mano, fluo, ardeo, mico, aro*, to ſhake, to wake, to rouſe, to ſooth, to rage, to flow, to ſhine or blaze, to plough.—Quaſſantia *tectum limina Æneas, caſu* concuſſus *acerbo—Ære* ciere *viros, Martemque accendere cantu—Æneas acuit Martem & ſe* ſuſcitat *ira—Impium* lenite *clamorem.* Lenibant *curas—Ne* ſævi *magna ſacerdos—Sudor ad imos* manabat *ſolos—Suſpenſæque diu lachrymæ* fluxere *per ora—Juvenali* ardebat *amore* —Micat *æreus enſis—Nullum maris æquor* arandum. It will be unneceſſary to inſert examples of the ſame nature from the Engliſh poets.

The

Digitized by Google

The words we term *emphatical*, are ſuch as by their ſound expreſs the ſenſe they are intended to convey; and with theſe the Greek abounds, above all other languages, not only from its natural copiouſneſs, flexibility, and ſignificance, but alſo from the variety of its dialects, which enables a writer to vary his terminations occaſionally as the nature of the ſubject requires, without offending the moſt delicate ear, or incurring the imputation of adopting vulgar provincial expreſſions. Every ſmatterer in Greek can repeat

Βῆ δ' ἀκέων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,

in which the two laſt words wonderfully echo to the ſenſe, conveying the idea of the ſea daſhing on the ſhore. How much more ſignificant in ſound than that beautiful image of Shakeſpeare—

"The ſea that on th' unnumber'd pebbles beats,"

And yet, if we conſider the ſtrictneſs of propriety, this laſt expreſſion would ſeem to have been ſelected on purpoſe to concur with the other circumſtances, which are brought together to aſcertain the vaſt height of Dover cliff: for the poet adds, "cannot be heard "ſo high." The place where Gloſter ſtood was ſo high above the ſurface of the ſea, that the φλοίσβος, or *daſhing*, could not be heard; and therefore an enthuſiaſtic admirer of Shakeſpeare might with ſome plauſibility affirm, the poet had choſen an expreſſion in which that ſound is not at all conveyed.

In the very ſame page of Homer's Iliad, we meet with two other ſtriking inſtances of the ſame ſort of beauty. Apollo, incenſed at the inſults his prieſt had ſuſtained, deſcends from the top of Olympus, with his bow and quiver rattling on his ſhoulder as he moved along:

Ἐκλαγξαν δ' ἀρ' ὀϊστοὶ ἐπ' ὤμων.

Here

Here the ſound of the word Ἐκλαγξαν admirably expreſſes the clanking of armour; as the third line after this ſurpriſingly imitates the twanging of a bow.

Δεινὰ δὲ κλαγγὰ γένετ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο.

In ſhrill-ton'd murmurs ſung the twanging bow.

Many beauties of the ſame kind are ſcattered through Homer, Pindar, and Theocritus, ſuch as the βομβεῦσα μελίσσα, *ſuſurrans apicula*; the ἄδυ ψιθύρισμα, *dulcem ſuſurrum*; and the μελισδεῖαι for the ſighing of the pine.

The Latin language teems with ſounds adapted to every ſituation, and the Engliſh is not deſtitute of this ſignificant energy. We have the *cooing* turtle, the *ſighing* reed, the *warbling* rivulet, the *ſliding* ſtream, the *whiſpering* breeze, the glance, the gleam, the flaſh, the *bickering* flame, the *daſhing* wave, the *guſhing* ſpring, the *bowling* blaſt, the *rattling* ſtorm, the *pattering* ſhower, the *crimp* earth, the *mouldering* tower, the *twanging* bow-ſtring, the *clanging* arms, the *clanking* chains, the *twinkling* ſtars, the *tinkling* chords, the *trickling* drops, the *twittering* ſwallow, the *cawing* rook, the *ſcreeching* owl; and a thouſand other words and epithets wonderfully ſuited to the ſenſe they imply.

Among the ſelect paſſages of poetry which we ſhall inſert by way of illuſtration, the reader will find inſtances of all the different tropes and figures, which the beſt authors have adopted in the variety of their poetical works, as well as of the apoſtrophe, abrupt tranſition, repetition, and proſopopœia.

In the mean time it will be neceſſary ſtill farther to analyſe thoſe principles, which conſtitute the eſſence of poetical merit; to diſplay thoſe delightful parterres,

Digitized by Google

parterres, that teem with the faireſt flowers of imagination, and diſtinguiſh between the gaudy offſpring of a cold inſipid fancy, and the glowing progeny, diffuſing ſweets, produced and invigorated by the ſun of Genius.

ESSAY XVI.

OF all the implements of Poetry the metaphor is the moſt generally and ſucceſsfully uſed, and indeed may be termed the Muſe's caduceus, by the power of which ſhe enchants all nature. The metaphor is a ſhorter ſimile, or rather a kind of magical coat, by which the ſame idea aſſumes a thouſand different appearances. Thus the word *plough*, which originally belongs to agriculture, being metaphorically uſed, repreſents the motion of a ſhip at ſea, and the effects of old age upon the human countenance—

—Plough'd the boſom of the deep—
And Time had plough'd his venerable front.

Almoſt every verb, noun ſubſtantive, or term of art in any language, may be in this manner applied to a variety of ſubjects with admirable effect; but the danger is in ſowing metaphors too thick, ſo as to diſtract the imagination of the reader, and incur the imputation of deſerting Nature, in order to hunt after conceits. Every day produces poems of all kinds ſo inflated with metaphor, that they may be compared to the gaudy bubbles blown up from a ſolution of ſoap. Longinus is of opinion, that a multitude of metaphors is never excuſable, except in thoſe caſes when the paſſions are rouſed, and, like a winter torrent, ruſh down impetuous, ſweeping them with collective

Digitized by Google

collective force along. He brings an inſtance of the following quotation from Demoſthenes. "Men, (ſays he) profligates, miſcreants, and flatterers, who having ſeverally preyed upon the bowels of their country, at length betrayed her liberty, firſt to Philip, and now again to Alexander; who, placing the chief felicity of life in the indulgence of infamous luſts and appetites, overturned in the duſt that freedom and independence, which was the chief aim and end of all our worthy anceſtors—*."

Ariſtotle and Theophraſtus ſeem to think it is rather too bold and hazardous to uſe metaphors ſo freely, without interpoſing ſome mitigating phraſe; ſuch as, "if I may be allowed the expreſſion," or ſome equivalent excuſe. At the ſame time, Longinus finds fault with Plato for hazarding ſome metaphors, which indeed appear to be equally affected and extravagant, when he ſays, "the government "of a ſtate ſhould not reſemble a bowl of hot fer- "menting wine, but a cool and moderate beverage, "*chaſtiſed by the ſober deity*"—a metaphor that ſignifies nothing more than "mixed or lowered with "water." Demetrius Phalereus juſtly obſerves, that though a judicious uſe of metaphors wonderfully raiſes, ſublimes, and adorns oratory or elocution; yet they ſhould ſeem to flow naturally from the ſubject; and too great a redundancy of them inflates the diſcourſe to a mere rhapſody. The ſame obſervation will hold in poetry; and the more liberal or ſparing uſe of them will depend in a great meaſure on the nature of the ſubject.

* Ἄνθρωποι, φησι, μιαροὶ, καὶ ἀλάστορες, καὶ κόλακες, ἠκρωτηριασμένοι τὰς ἐκείνων ἕκαστοι παλρίδας, τὴν ἐλευθερίαν προϊέμενοι κατέπιπκότες, πρότερον Φιλίππῳ, νῦν δ' Ἀλεξάνδρῳ, τῇ γαστρὶ μεῖρᾶνλες καὶ τοῖς αἰσχίστοις τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν, τὴν δ' ἐλευθερίαν, καὶ τὸ μηδένα ἔχειν δεσπότην αὐτῶν, ἃ τοῖς πρόσθεν, Ἕλλησιν ὅροι τῶν ἀγαθῶν ἦσαν καὶ κανόνες, &c. &c.

Paſſion.

Digitized by Google

Paſſion itſelf is very figurative, and often burſts out into metaphors; but in touching the pathos, the poet muſt be perfectly well acquainted with the emotions of the human ſoul, and carefully diſtinguiſh between thoſe metaphors, which riſe glowing from the heart, and thoſe cold conceits, which are ingendered in the fancy. Should one of theſe laſt unfortunately intervene, it will be apt to deſtroy the whole effect of the moſt pathetical incident or ſituation. Indeed it requires the moſt delicate taſte, and a conſummate knowledge of propriety, to employ metaphors in ſuch a manner, as to avoid what the Antients called the τὸ ψυχρὸν, the *frigid*, or falſe ſublime. Inſtances of this kind were frequent even among the correct antients. Sappho herſelf is blamed for uſing the hyperbole λευκοτέροι χιόνος, *whiter than ſnow*. Demetrius is ſo nice as to be diſguſted at the ſimile of *ſwift as the wind*; though, in ſpeaking of a race-horſe, we know from experience that this is not even an hyperbole. He would have had more reaſon to cenſure that kind of metaphor, which Ariſtotle ſtiles καθ' ἐνέργειαν, exhibiting things inanimate as endued with ſenſe and reaſon; ſuch as that of the ſharp-pointed arrow *eager* to take wing among the crowd. "Ο' ξυβελὴς καθ' ὅμιλον ἱπτάμενος ἱέσθαι "μενεαίνων." Not but that in deſcriptive poetry this figure is often allowed and admired. The *cruel* ſword, the *ruthleſs* dagger, the *ruffian* blaſt, are epithets which frequently occur. The *faithful* boſom of the earth, the *joyous* boughs, the trees that *admire their images* reflected in the ſtream, and many other examples of this kind, are found diſſeminated through the works of our beſt modern poets: yet ſtill they muſt be ſheltered under the privilege of the *poetica licentia*; and, except in poetry, they would give offence.

Digitized by Google

More chaſte metaphors are freely uſed in all kinds of writing; more ſparingly in Hiſtory; and more abundantly in Rhetoric: we have ſeen that Plato indulges in them even to exceſs. The orations of Demoſthenes are animated, and even inflamed with metaphors, ſome of them ſo bold as even to entail upon him the cenſure of the critics. Τότε τῷ Πυθωνι τῷ ῥήτορι ῥέονϛι καθ' ὑμῶν.—"then I did not yield to Py-"thon the orator, when he *overflowed* you with a "tide of eloquence." Cicero is ſtill more liberal in the uſe of them; he ranſacks all nature, and pours forth a redundancy of figures, even with a laviſh hand. Even the chaſte Xenophon, who generally illuſtrates his ſubject by way of ſimile, ſometimes ventures to produce an expreſſive metaphor, ſuch as part of the phalanx *fluctuated* in the march; and indeed nothing can be more ſignificant than this word ἐξεκύμηνε, to repreſent a body of men ſtaggered, and on the point of giving way. Armſtrong has uſed the word *fluctuate* with admirable efficacy, in his philoſophical poem intituled *the Art of Preſerving Health.*

O! when the growling winds contend, and all
The founding foreſt *fluctuates* in the ſtorm,
To ſink in warm repoſe, and hear the din
Howl o'er the ſteady battlements——

The word *fluctuate* on this occaſion not only exhibits an idea of ſtruggling, but alſo echoes to the ſenſe like the ἔφριξεν δὲ μαχὴ of Homer; which, by the bye, it is impoſſible to render into Engliſh: for the verb φρίσσω ſignifies not only to ſtand erect like prickles, as a grove of lances, but alſo to make a noiſe like the craſhing of armour, the hiſſing of javelins, and the ſplinters of ſpears.

Over and above an exceſs of figures, a young author is apt to run into a confuſion of mixed metaphors, which leave the ſenſe disjointed, and diſtract the imagination: Shakſpeare himſelf is often guilty of

Digitized by Google

of theſe irregularities. The Soliloquy in Hamlet, which we have ſo often heard extolled in terms of admiration, is, in our opinion, a heap of abſurdities, whether we conſider the ſituation, the ſentiment, the argumentation, or the poetry. Hamlet is informed by the Ghoſt, that his father was murdered, and therefore he is tempted to murder himſelf, even after he had promiſed to take vengeance on the uſurper, and expreſſed the utmoſt eagerneſs to atchieve this enterprize. It does not appear that he had the leaſt reaſon to wiſh for death; but every motive, which may be ſuppoſed to influence the mind of a young prince, concurred to render life deſirable—revenge towards the uſurper; love for the fair Ophelia; and the ambition of reigning. Beſides, when he had an opportunity of dying without being acceſſary to his own death; when he had nothing to do but, in obedience to his uncle's command, to allow himſelf to be conveyed quietly to England, where he was ſure of ſuffering death; inſtead of amuſing himſelf with meditations on mortality, he very wiſely conſulted the means of ſelf-preſervation, turned the tables upon his attendants, and returned to Denmark. But granting him to have been reduced to the loweſt ſtate of deſpondence, ſurrounded with nothing but horror and deſpair, ſick of this life, and eager to tempt futurity, we ſhall ſee how far he argues like a philoſopher.

In order to ſupport this general charge againſt an author ſo univerſally held in veneration, whoſe very errors have helped to ſanctify his character among the multitude, we will deſcend to particulars, and analyſe this famous Soliloquy.

Hamlet, having aſſumed the diſguiſe of madneſs, as a cloak, under which he might the more effectually revenge his father's death upon the murderer and uſurper, appears alone upon the ſtage in a pen-

Digitized by Google

ſive and melancholy attitude, and communes with himſelf in theſe words:

To be, or not to be? That is the queſtion.
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind, to ſuffer
The ſlings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms againſt a ſea of troubles,
And by oppoſing, end them?—To die—to ſleep—
No more; and by a ſleep, to ſay, we end
The heart-ach, and the thouſand natural ſhocks
That fleſh is heir to; 'tis a conſummation
Devoutly to be wiſh'd.—To die—to ſleep—
To ſleep! perchance to dream; ay, there's the rub—
For in that ſleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have ſhuffled off this mortal coil,
Muſt give us pauſe.——There's the reſpect
That makes calamity of ſo long life.
For who would bear the whips and ſcorns of time,
Th' oppreſſor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
The pangs of deſpiſed love, the law's delay,
The inſolence of office, and the ſpurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,
When he himſelf might his *quietus* make
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardles bear,
To groan and ſweat under a weary life,
But that the dread of ſomething after death
(That undiſcover'd country, from whoſe bourne
No traveller returns) puzzles the will;
And makes us rather bear thoſe ills we have,
Than fly to others that we know not of.
Thus conſcience does make cowards of us all;
And thus the native hue of reſolution
Is ſicklied o'er with the pale caſt of thought;
And enterprizes of great pith and moment,
With this regard, their currents turn away,
And loſe the name of action.

We have already obſerved that there is not any apparent circumſtance in the fate or ſituation of Hamlet, that ſhould prompt him to harbour one thought of ſelf-murder; and therefore theſe expreſſions of deſpair imply an impropriety in point of character. But ſuppoſing his condition was truly deſperate, and he ſaw no poſſibility of repoſe but in the uncertain harbour of death, let us ſee in what manner he argues on

Digitized by Google

on that ſubject. The queſtion is, "To be, or not to be;" to die by my own hand, or live and ſuffer the miſeries of life. He proceeds to explain the alternative in theſe terms, "Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to ſuffer, or endure the frowns of fortune, or to take arms, and by oppoſing, end them." Here he deviates from his firſt propoſition, and death is no longer the queſtion. The only doubt is, whether he will ſtoop to misfortune, or exert his faculties in order to ſurmount it. This ſurely is the obvious meaning, and indeed the only meaning that can be implied in theſe words,

> Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to ſuffer
> The ſlings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
> Or to take arms againſt a ſea of troubles,
> And by oppoſing, end them.

He now drops this idea, and reverts to his reaſoning on death, in the courſe of which he owns himſelf deterred from ſuicide by the thoughts of what may follow death;

> ——the dread of ſomething after death
> (That undiſcover'd country, from whoſe bourne
> No traveller returns).

This might be a good argument in a Heathen or Pagan, and ſuch indeed Hamlet really was; but Shakſpeare has already repreſented him as a good Catholic, who muſt have been acquainted with the truths of revealed religion, and ſays expreſſly in this very play,

> ——had not the Everlaſting fix'd
> His canon 'gainſt ſelf-murder.

Moreover, he had juſt been converſing with his father's ſpirit piping hot from purgatory, which we preſume is not within the *bourne* of this world. The dread of what may happen after death (ſays he)

Make

Makes us rather bear thoſe *ills* we have,
Than fly to *others* that we know not of.

This declaration at leaſt implies ſome knowledge of the other world, and expreſſly aſſerts, that there muſt be *ills* in that world, though what kind of *ills* they are, we do not know. The argument therefore may be reduced to this lemma: this world abounds with *ills* which I feel: the other world abounds with *ills*, the nature of which I do not know: therefore, I will rather bear thoſe *ills* I have, "than fly to *others* which I know not of:" a deduction amounting to a certainty, with reſpect to the only circumſtance that could create a doubt, namely, whether in death he ſhould reſt from his miſery; and if he was certain there were evils in the next world, as well as in this, he had no room to reaſon at all about the matter. What alone could juſtify his thinking on this ſubject, would have been the hope of flying from the ills of this world, without encountering any *others* in the next.

Nor is Hamlet more accurate in the following reflection:

Thus conſcience does make cowards of us all.

A bad conſcience will make us cowards; but a good conſcience will make us brave. It does not appear that any thing lay heavy on his conſcience; and from the premiſes we cannot help inferring, that conſcience in this caſe was entirely out of the queſtion. Hamlet was deterred from ſuicide by a full conviction, that in flying from one ſea of troubles which he did know, he ſhould fall into *another* which he did not know.

His whole chain of reaſoning therefore ſeems inconſiſtent and incongruous. "I am doubtful whether I ſhould live, or do violence upon my own life: for I know not whether it is more honourable to bear misfortune patiently, than to exert myſelf in

Digitized by Google

in oppoſing misfortune, and by oppoſing, end it." Let us throw it into the form of a ſyllogiſm, it will ſtand thus: "I am oppreſſed with ills: I know not whether it is more honourable to bear thoſe ills patiently, or to end them by taking arms againſt them; *ergo*, I am doubtful whether I ſhould ſlay myſelf or live. To die, is no more than to ſleep; and to *ſay* that by a ſleep we end the heart-ach, &c. "'tis a conſummation devoutly to be wiſh'd." Now, to *ſay it*, was of no conſequence unleſs it had been true. "I am afraid of the dreams that may happen in that ſleep of death; and I chooſe rather to bear thoſe ills I have in this life, than fly to *other ills* in that undiſcovered country, from whoſe bourne no traveller ever returns I have ills that are almoſt inſupportable in this life. I know not what is in the next, becauſe it is an undiſcovered country: *ergo*, I'd rather bear thoſe ills I have, than fly to others which I know not of." Here the concluſion is by no means warranted by the premiſes. "I am ſore afflicted in this life; but I will rather bear the afflictions of this life, than plunge myſelf in the afflictions of another life: *ergo*, conſcience makes cowards of us all." But this concluſion would juſtify the logician in ſaying, *negatur conſequens*; for it is entirely detached both from the major and minor propoſition.

This Soliloquy is not leſs exceptionable in the propriety of expreſſion, than in the chain of argumentation.—"To die—to ſleep—no more," contains an ambiguity, which all the art of punctuation cannot remove; for it may ſignify that "to die, is to ſleep no more; or the expreſſion—"no more," may be conſidered as an abrupt apoſtrophe in thinking, as if he meant to ſay—"no more of that reflection."

"Ay, there's the rub"—is a vulgariſm beneath the dignity of Hamlet's character, and the words that follow leave the ſenſe imperfect;

Digitized by Google

For in that ſleep of death what dreams may come,
When we have ſhuffled off this mortal coil,
Muſt give us pauſe.

Not the dreams that might come, but the fear of what dreams might come, occaſioned the pauſe or heſitation. *Reſpect* in the ſame line may be allowed to paſs for conſideration: but

Th' oppreſſor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,

according to the invariable acceptation of the words *wrong* and *contumely*, can ſignify nothing but the wrongs ſuſtained by the oppreſſor, and the contumely or abuſe thrown upon the proud man; though it is plain that Shakſpeare uſed them in a different ſenſe: neither is the word *ſpurn* a ſubſtantive; yet as ſuch he has inſerted it in theſe lines:

The inſolence of office, and the ſpurns
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes.

If we conſider the metaphors of the Soliloquy, we ſhall find them jumbled together in a ſtrange confuſion.

If the metaphors were reduced to painting, we ſhould find it a very difficult taſk, if not altogether impracticable, to repreſent with any propriety outrageous Fortune uſing her ſlings and arrows, between which indeed there is no ſort of analogy in Nature. Neither can any figure be more ridiculouſly abſurd than that of a man taking arms againſt a ſea, excluſive of the incongruous medley of ſlings, arrows, and ſeas, juſtled within the compaſs of one reflection. What follows is a ſtrange rhapſody of broken images, of ſleeping, dreaming, and ſhifting off a *coil*, which laſt conveys no idea, that can be repreſented on canvas. A man may be exhibited ſhuffling off his garments or his chains: but how he ſhould ſhuffle off a *coil*, which is another term for noiſe and tumult, we cannot comprehend. Then we have "long-lived Calamity," and "Time armed with

Digitized by Google

with whips and ſcorns;" and "patient Merit ſpurned at by Unworthineſs;" and "Miſery with a bare bodkin going to make his own *quietus*," which at beſt is but a mean metaphor. Theſe are followed by Figures "ſweating under fardles of burdens," "puzzled with doubts," "ſhaking with fears," and "flying from evils." Finally we ſee "Reſolution ſicklied o'er with pale thought," a conception like that of repreſenting health by ſickneſs; and a "current of pith turned away ſo as to loſe the name of action," which is both an error in fancy, and a ſoleciſm in ſenſe. In a word, this Soliloquy may be compared to the *Ægri ſomnia*, and the *Tabulæ, cujus vanæ fingentur ſpecies.*

But while we cenſure the chaos of broken, incongruous metaphors, we ought alſo to caution the young Poet againſt the oppoſite extreme of purſuing a metaphor, until the ſpirit is quite exhauſted in a ſucceſſion of cold conceits; ſuch as we ſee in the following letter, ſaid to be ſent by Tamerlane to the Turkiſh Emperor Bajazet. "Where is the monarch "that dares oppoſe our arms? Where is the poten- "tate who doth not glory in being numbered among "our vaſſals? As for thee, deſcended from a Turco- "man mariner, ſince the veſſel of thy unbounded am- "bition hath been wrecked in the gulph of thy ſelf- "love, it would be proper that thou ſhouldeſt furl "the ſails of thy temerity, and caſt the anchor of "repentance in the port of ſincerity and juſtice, "which is the harbour of ſafety: leſt the tempeſt of "our vengeance make thee periſh in the ſea of that "puniſhment thou haſt deſerved.".

But if theſe laboured conceits are ridiculous in poetry, they are ſtill more inexcuſeable in proſe: ſuch as we find them frequently occur in Strada's Bellum Belgicum. *Vix deſcenderat à prætoria navi Cæſar; cùm fœda ilico exorta in portu tempeſtas, claſſem impetu disjecit,*

Digitized by Google

disjecit, prætoriam hausit ; quasi non vecturam amplius Cæsarem Cæsarisque fortunam. "Cæsar had scarcely set his feet on shore, when a terrible tempest arising, shattered the fleet even in the harbour, and sent to the bottom the Prætorian ship, as if he resolved it should no longer carry Cæsar and his fortunes."

Yet this is modest in comparison of the following flowers: *Alii, pulsis è tormento catenis discerpti sectique, dimidiato corpore pugnabant sibi superstites, ac peremptæ partis ultores.* "Others, dissevered and cut in twain by chain-shot, fought with one half of their bodies that remained, in revenge of the other half that was slain."

Homer, Horace, and even the chaste Virgil, is not free from conceits. The latter, speaking of a man's hand cut off in battle, says,

Te decisa suum, Laridè, dextera quærit:
Semianimesque micant digiti, ferrumque retractant:

thus enduing the amputated hand with sense and volition. This, to be sure, is a violent figure, and hath been justly condemned by some accurate critics: but we think they are too severe in extending the same censure to some other passages in the most admired authors.

Virgil in his Sixth Eclogue says,

Omnia quæ, Phœbo quondam meditante, beatus
Audiit Eurotas, jussitque edisцere lauros,
Ille canit.

Whate'er when Phœbus bless'd th' Arcadian plain
Eurotas heard and taught his bays the strain,
The senior sung—

And Pope has copied the conceit in his Pastorals,

Thames heard the numbers as he flow'd along,
And bade his willows learn the mourning song.

Digitized by Google

Vida thus begins his Firſt Eclogue:

Dicite, vos muſæ, et juvenum memorate querelas;
Dicite: nam motas ipſas ad carmina cautes,
Et requieſſe ſuos perhibent vaga flumina curſus.

Say heav'nly muſe, their youthful frays rehearſe;
Begin, ye daughters of immortal verſe;
Exulting rocks have own'd the power of ſong,
And rivers liſten'd as they flow'd along—

Racine adopts the ſame bold figure in his Phædra:

Le flot qui l'apporta recule épouvanté:

The wave that bore him, backwards ſhrunk appall'd.

Even Milton has indulged himſelf in the ſame licence of expreſſion—

—As when to them who ſail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are paſt
Mozambic, off at ſea north-eaſt winds blow
Sabæan odour from the ſpicy ſhore
Of Araby the bleſt; with ſuch delay
Well pleas'd, they ſlack their courſe, and many a league
Chear'd with the grateful ſmell, old ocean ſmiles.

Shakſpeare ſays,

——I've ſeen
Th' ambitious ocean ſwell, and rage, and foam,
To be exalted with the threat'ning clouds.

And indeed more correct writers, both ancient and modern, abound with the ſame kind of figure, which is reconciled to propriety, and even inveſted with beauty, by the efficacy of the proſopopœia, which perſonifies the object. Thus, when Virgil ſays Enipeus heard the ſongs of Apollo, he raiſes up, as by enchantment, the idea of a river god crowned with ſedges, his head raiſed above the ſtream, and in his countenance the expreſſion of pleaſed attention. By the ſame magic we ſee, in the couplet quoted from

Digitized by Google

from Pope's Paſtorals, old father Thames leaning upon his urn, and liſtening to the Poet's ſtrain.

Thus in the regions of Poetry, all Nature, even the paſſions and affections of the mind, may be perſonified into picturesque figures for the entertainment of the reader. Ocean ſmiles or frowns, as the ſea is calm or tempeſtuous; a Triton rules on every angry billow; every mountain has its Nymph; every ſtream its Naiad; every tree its Hamadryad; and every art its Genius. We cannot therefore aſſent to thoſe, who cenſure Thomſon as licentious for uſing the following figure:

O vale of bliſs! O ſoftly ſwelling hills!
On which the power of cultivation lies,
And joys to ſee the wonders of his toil.

We cannot conceive a more beautiful image than that of the Genius of Agriculture diſtinguiſhed by the implements of his art, imbrowned with labour, glowing with health, crowned with a garland of foliage, flowers, and fruit, lying ſtretched at his eaſe on the brow of a gentle ſwelling hill, and contemplating with pleaſure the happy effects of his own induſtry.

Neither can we join iſſue againſt Shakſpeare for this compariſon, which hath likewiſe incurred the cenſure of the Critics:

——The noble ſiſter of Poplicola,
The moon of Rome; chaſte as the icicle,
That's curdled by the froſt from pureſt ſnow,
And hangs on Dian's temple—

This is no more than illuſtrating a quality of the mind, by comparing it with a ſenſible object. If there is no impropriety in ſaying ſuch a man is true as ſteel, firm as a rock, inflexible as an oak, unſteady as the ocean, or in deſcribing a diſpoſition cold as ice, or fickle as the wind; and theſe expreſſions are

Digitized by Google

are juſtified by conſtant practice; we ſhall hazard an aſſertion, that the compariſon of a chaſte woman to an icicle is proper and pictureſque, as it obtains only in the circumſtances of cold and purity; but that the addition of its being curdled from the pureſt ſnow, and hanging on the temple of Diana, the patroneſs of virginity, heightens the whole into a moſt beautiful ſimile, that gives a very reſpectable and amiable idea of the character in queſtion.

The Simile is no more than an extended metaphor, introduced to illuſtrate and beautify the ſubject: it ought to be apt, ſtriking, properly purſued, and adorned with all the graces of poetical melody. But a ſimile of this kind ought never to proceed from the mouth of a perſon under any great agitation of ſpirit; ſuch as a tragic character overwhelmed with grief, diſtracted by contending cares, or agoniſing in the pangs of death. The language of paſſion will not admit ſimile, which is always the reſult of ſtudy and deliberation. We will not allow a hero the privilege of a dying ſwan, which is ſaid to chant its approaching fate in the moſt melodious ſtrain; and therefore nothing can be more ridiculouſly unnatural, than the repreſentation of a lover dying upon the ſtage with a laboured ſimile in his mouth.

The orientals, whoſe language was extremely figurative, have been very careleſs in the choice of their ſimilies: provided the reſemblance obtained in one circumſtance, they minded not whether they diſagreed with the ſubject in every other reſpect. Many inſtances of this defect in congruity may be culled from the moſt ſublime parts of Scripture.

Homer has been blamed for the bad choice of his ſimiles on ſome particular occaſions. He compares Ajax to an aſs in the Iliad, and Ulyſſes to a ſteak broiling on the coals in the Odyſſey. His admirers have endeavoured to excuſe him, by reminding us

of

Digitized by Google

of the ſimplicity of the age in which he wrote; but they have not been able to prove that any ideas of dignity or importance were, even in thoſe days, affixed to the character of an aſs, or the quality of a beef-collop; therefore they were very improper illuſtrations for any ſituation, in which a hero ought to be repreſented.

Virgil has degraded the wife of king Latinus by comparing her, when ſhe was actuated by the fury, to a top which the boys laſh for diverſion. This doubtleſs is a low image, though in other reſpects the compariſon is not deſtitute of propriety; but he is much more juſtly cenſured for the following ſimile, which has no ſort of reference to the ſubject. Speaking of Turnus he ſays,

——medio dux agmine Turnus
Vertitur arma tenens, et toto vertice ſupra eſt.
Ceu ſeptem ſurgens ſedatis amnibus altus
Per tacitum Ganges: aut pingui flumine Nilus
Cum refluit campis, et jam ſe condidit alveo.

But Turnus, chief amidſt the warrior train,
In armour tow'rs the talleſt on the plain.
The Ganges thus by ſeven rich ſtreams ſupply'd,
A mighty maſs devolves in ſilent pride.
Thus Nilus pours from his prolific urn,
When from the fields o'erflow'd his vagrant ſtreams return.

Theſe no doubt are majeſtic images; but they bear no ſort of reſemblance to an hero glittering in armour at the head of his forces.

Horace has been ridiculed by ſome ſhrewd critics for this compariſon, which however we think is more defenſible than the former. Addreſſing himſelf to Munatius Plancus, he ſays:

Albus ut obſcuro deterget nubila cœlo
Sæpe Notus, neque parturit imbres
Perpetuos: ſic tu ſapiens finire memento
Triſtitiam, vitæque labores
Molli, Plance, mero.——

As

Digitized by Google

As Notus often, when the welkin low'rs,
Sweeps off the clouds, nor teems perpetual ſhow'rs,
So let thy wiſdom, free from anxious ſtrife,
In mellow wine diſſolve the cares of life.

DUNKIN.

The analogy, it muſt be confeſſed, is not very ſtriking: but nevertheleſs it is not altogether void of propriety. The Poet reaſons thus: as the South-wind, though generally attended with rain, is often known to diſpel the clouds, and render the weather ſerene; ſo do you, though generally on the rack of thought, remember to relax ſometimes, and drown your cares in wine. As the South-wind is not always moiſt, ſo you ought not always to be dry.

A few inſtances of inaccuracy, or mediocrity, can never derogate from the ſuperlative merit of Homer and Virgil, whoſe poems are the great magazines, replete with every ſpecies of beauty and magnificence, particularly abounding with ſimiles which aſtoniſh, delight, and tranſport the reader.

Every ſimile ought not only to be well adapted to the ſubject, but alſo to include every excellence of deſcription, and to be coloured with the warmeſt tints of Poetry. Nothing can be more happily hit off than the following in the Georgics, to which the Poet compares Orpheus lamenting his loſt Eurydice.

Qualis populeâ mœrens Philomela ſub umbrâ
Amiſſos queritur fœtus, quos durus arator
Obſervans nido implumes detraxit; at illa
Flet noctem, ramoque ſedens miſerabile carmen
Integrat, et mœſtis late loca queſtibus implet.

So Philomela, from th' umbrageous wood
In ſtrains melodious mourns her tender brood,
Snatch'd from the neſt by ſome rude ploughman's hand,
On ſome lone bough the warbler takes her ſtand;
The live-long night ſhe mourns the cruel wrong;
And hill and dale reſound the plantive ſong.

Here

Here we not only find the moſt ſcrupulous propriety, and the happieſt choice, in comparing the Thracian bard to Philomel the poet of the grove; but alſo the moſt beautiful deſcription, containing a fine touch of the pathos, in which laſt particular indeed Virgil, in our opinion, excels all other poets, whether antient or modern.

One would imagine that Nature had exhauſted itſelf, in order to embelliſh the Poems of Homer, Virgil, and Milton, with ſmiles and metaphors. The firſt of theſe very often uſes the compariſon of the wind, the whirlwind, the hail, the torrent, to expreſs the rapidity of his combatants: but when he comes to deſcribe the velocity of the immortal horſes, that drew the chariot of Juno, he raiſes his ideas to the ſubject, and, as Longinus obſerves, meaſures every leap by the whole breadth of the horizon.

Ὅσσον δ' ἠεροειδὲς ἀνὴρ ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν
Ἥμενος ἐν σκοπιῇ, λευσσων ἐπὶ οἶνοπα πόντον,
Τόσσον ἐπιθρῴσκουσι θεῶν ὑψηχέες ἵπποι.

For as a watchman from ſome rock on high
O'er the wide main extends his boundleſs eye;
Thro' ſuch a ſpace of air with thund'ring ſound
At ev'ry leap th' immortal courſers bound.

The celerity of this goddeſs ſeems to be a favourite idea with the Poet; for in another place he compares it to the thought of a traveller revolving in his mind the different places he had ſeen, and paſſing through them in imagination more ſwift than the lightning flies from Eaſt to Weſt.

Homer's beſt ſimilies have been copied by Virgil, and almoſt every ſucceeding poet, howſoever they may have varied in the manner of expreſſion. In the third book of the Iliad, Menelaus ſeeing Paris, is compared to a hungry lion eſpying a hind or goat:

Ὡσει λέων ἰχάνῳ μεγάλῳ ἐπὶ σώμαλι κύρσας
Εὑρὼν ἢ ἔλαφον κεραὸν, ἢ ἄγριον αἶγα, &c.

So

Digitized by Google

So joys the lion, if a branching deer
Or mountain goat his bulky prize appear.
In vain the youths oppoſe, the maſtiffs bay,
The lordly ſavage rends the panting prey.
Thus fond of vengeance, with a furious bound
In clinging arms he leaps upon the ground.

The Mantuan bard in the tenth book of the Æneid, applies the ſame ſimile to Mezentius, when he beholds Acron in the battle.

Impaſtus ſtabula alta leo ceu ſæpe peragrans
(Suadet enim veſana fames) ſi forte fugacem
Conſpexit capream, aut ſurgentem in cornua cervum;
Gaudet hians immane, comaſque arrexit, et hæret
Viſceribus ſuper accumbens: lavit improba teter
Ora cruor.—

Then as a hungry lion, who beholds
A gameſome goat who friſks about the folds,
Or beamy ſtag that grazes on the plain;
He runs, he roars, he ſhakes his riſing mane;
He grins and opens wide his greedy jaws,
The prey lies panting underneath his paws;
He fills his famiſh'd maw, his mouth runs o'er
With unchew'd morſels, while he churns the gore.

DRYDEN.

The reader will perceive that Virgil has improved the ſimile in one particular, and in another fallen ſhort of his original. The deſcription of the lion ſhaking his mane, opening his hideous jaws diſtained with the blood of his prey, is great and picturesque: but on the other hand, he has omitted the circumſtance of devouring it without being intimidated, or reſtrained by the dogs and youths that ſurround him; a circumſtance that adds greatly to our idea of his ſtrength, intrepidity, and importance.

Digitized by Google

ESSAY XVII.

OF all the figures in Poetry, that called the Hyperbole is managed with the greateſt difficulty. The Hyperbole is an exaggeration, with which the Muſe is indulged, for the better illuſtration of her ſubject, when ſhe is warmed into enthuſiaſm. Quintilian calls it an ornament of the bolder kind. Demetrius Phalereus is ſtill more ſevere. He ſays, the Hyperbole is of all forms of ſpeech the moſt frigid. Μάλιςα δὲ ἡ Ὑπερβολὴ ψυχρότατον τοπίων: but this muſt be underſtood with ſome grains of allowance. Poetry is animated by the paſſions; and all the paſſions exaggerate. Paſſion itſelf is a magnifying medium. There are beautiful inſtances of the Hyperbole in the Scripture, which a reader of ſenſibility cannot read without being ſtrongly affected. The difficulty lies in chooſing ſuch Hyperboles, as the ſubject will admit of; for, according to the definition of Theophraſtus, the frigid in ſtyle is that, which exceeds the expreſſion ſuitable to the ſubject. The judgment does not revolt againſt Homer for repreſenting the horſes of Erichthonius running over the ſtanding corn without breaking off the heads, becauſe the whole is conſidered as a fable, and the North wind is repreſented as their Sire: but the imagination is a little ſtartled, when Virgil, in imitation of this Hyperbole, exhibits Camilla as flying over it without even touching the tops.

Illa vel intactæ ſegetis per ſumma volaret
Gramina——

This elegant author, we are afraid, has upon ſome other occaſions degenerated into the frigid, in ſtraining to improve upon his great maſter.

Homer

Digitized by Google

Homer in the Odyſſey, a work which Longinus does not ſcruple to charge with bearing the marks of old age, deſcribes a ſtorm in which all the four winds were concerned together.

Σὺν δ' Εὖρός τε, Νότος τ' ἴαχεν, Ζέφυρός τε δυσαὴς,
Καὶ Βορέης αἰθρηγένετης, μέγα κῦμα κυλίνδων.

We know that ſuch a contention of contrary blaſts could not poſſibly exiſt in Nature; for even in hurricanes the winds blow alternately from different points of the compaſs. Nevertheleſs Virgil adopts the deſcription, and adds to its extravagance.

Incubuere mari, totumque à ſedibus imis
Una Euruſque Notuſque ruunt, creberque procellis
Africus.

Here the winds not only blow together, but they turn the whole body of the ocean topſy turvey—.

Eaſt, Weſt, and South, engage with furious ſweep,
And from its loweſt bed upturn the foaming deep.

The North wind, however, is ſtill more miſchievous.——

——*Stridens aquilone procella*
Velum adverſa ferit, fluctuſque ad ſidera tollit.

The ſail then Boreas rends with hideous cry,
And whirls the madd'ning billows to the ſky.

The motion of the ſea between Scylla and Charybdis is ſtill more magnified; and Ætna is exhibited as throwing out volumes of flame, which bruſh the ſtars *. Such expreſſions as theſe are not intended as a real repreſentation of the thing ſpecified; they are deſigned to ſtrike the reader's imagination; but they generally ſerve as marks of the author's ſinking under his own ideas, who, apprehenſive of

* Speaking of the firſt, he ſays,

Tollimur in cœlum curvato gurgite, et ijdem
Subductâ ad manes imos deſcendimus undâ

Of the other,

Attollitque globos flammarum, ſidera lambit.

 injuring

Digitized by Google

injuring the greatneſs of his own conception, is hurried into exceſs and extravagance.

Quintilian allows the uſe of Hyperbole, when words are wanting to expreſs any thing in its juſt ſtrength or due energy: then, he ſays, it is better to exceed in expreſſion, than fall ſhort of the conception: but he likewiſe obſerves, that there is no figure or form of ſpeech ſo apt to run into ſuſtian. *Nec alia magis via in κακοζηλιαν itur.*

If the chaſte Virgil has thus treſpaſſed upon poetical probability, what can we expect from Lucan but Hyperboles even more ridiculouſly extravagant? He repreſents the winds in conteſt, the ſea in ſuſpence, doubting to which it ſhall give way. He affirms that its motion would have been ſo violent as to produce a ſecond deluge, had not Jupiter kept it under by the clouds; and as to the ſhip during this dreadful uproar *the ſails touch the clouds, while the keel ſtrikes the ground.*

Nubila tanguntur velis, et terra carina.

This image of daſhing water at the ſtars, Sir Richard Blackmore has produced in colours truly ridiculous. Deſcribing ſpouting whales in his Prince Arthur, he makes the following compariſon:

Like ſome prodigious water-engine made
To play on heav'n, if fire ſhould heav'n invade.

The great fault in all theſe inſtances is a deviation from propriety, owing to the erroneous judgment of the writer, who, endeavouring to captivate the admiration with novelty, very often ſhocks the underſtanding with extravagance. Of this nature is the whole deſcription of the Cyclops, both in the Odyſſey of Homer and in the Æneid of Virgil. It muſt be owned however that the Latin Poet with all his merit is more apt than his great original to dazzle

Digitized by Google

us with falſe fire, and practiſe upon the imagination with gay conceits, that will not bear the critic's examination. There is not in any of Homer's works now ſubſiſting ſuch an example of the falſe ſublime, as Virgil's deſcription of the thunder-bolts forging under the hammers of the Cyclops.

Tres imbris torti radios, tres nubis aquoſæ
Addiderant, rutili tres ignis et alitis Auſtri.

Three rays of-writhen rain, of fire three more,
Of winged ſouthern winds, and cloudy ſtore,
As many parts, the dreadful mixture frame.

DRYDEN.

This is altogether a fantaſtic piece of affectation, of which we can form no ſenſible image, and ſerves to chill the fancy, rather than warm the admiration of a judging reader.

Extravagant Hyperbole is a weed that grows in great plenty through the works of our admired Shakſpeare. In the following deſcription, which hath been much celebrated, one ſees he has had an eye to Virgil's thunder-bolts.

O, then I ſee queen Mab hath been with you.
She is the fancy's midwife, and ſhe comes
In ſhape no bigger than an agat-ſtone
On the fore-finger of an alderman,
Drawn with a team of little atomies,
Athwart men's noſes as they lie aſleep:
Her waggon ſpokes made of long ſpinners legs;
The cover, of the wings of graſshoppers;
The traces, of the ſmalleſt ſpider's web;
The collars, of the *moonſhine's watery beams*, &c.

Even in deſcribing fantaſtic beings, there is a propriety to be obſerved; but ſurely nothing can be more revolting to common ſenſe, than this numbering of the *moon beams* among the other implements of queen Mab's harneſs, which, though extremely ſlender and diminutive, are nevertheleſs objects of the touch, and may be conceived capable of uſe.

Digitized by Google

The Ode and Satire admit of the boldeſt Hyperboles: ſuch exaggerations ſuit the impetuous warmth of the one; and in the other have a good effect in expoſing folly, and exciting horror againſt vice. They may be likewiſe ſucceſsfully uſed in Comedy, for moving and managing the powers of ridicule.

ESSAY XVIII.

VERSE is an harmonious arrangement of long and ſhort ſyllables, adapted to different kinds of poetry, and owes its origin entirely to the meaſured cadence, or muſic, which was uſed when the firſt ſongs or hymns were recited. This muſic, divided into different parts, required a regular return of the ſame meaſure, and thus every *ſtrophe*, *antiſtrophe*, *ſtanza*, contained the ſame number of feet. To know what conſtituted the different kinds of rythmical feet among the antients, with reſpect to the number and quantity of their ſyllables, we have nothing to do but to conſult thoſe who have written on grammar and proſody: it is the buſineſs of a ſchool-maſter, rather than the accompliſhment of a Man of Taſte.

Various eſſays have been made in different countries to compare the characters of antient and modern verſification, and to point out the difference beyond any poſſibility of miſtake. But they have made diſtinctions, where in fact there was no difference, and left the criterion unobſerved. They have transferred the name of rhyme to a regular repetition of the ſame ſound at the end of the line, and ſet up this vile monotony as the characteriſtic of modern verſe, in contradiſtinction to the feet of the antients,

Digitized by Google

antients, which they pretend the Poetry of modern languages will not admit.

Rhyme, from the Greek word Ρυθμος, is nothing elſe but number, which was eſſential to the antient, as well as to the modern, verſification. As to the jingle of ſimilar ſounds, though it was never uſed by the antients in any regular return in the middle, or at the end of the line, and was by no means deemed eſſential to the verſification, yet they did not reject it as a blemiſh, where it occurred without the appearance of conſtraint. We meet with it often in the epithets of Homer,—Αργυροπεζα Βιαιο.—Ανακτ Ανδρων Αγαμεμνων—almoſt the whole firſt Ode of Anacreon is what we call rhyme. The following line of Virgil has been admired for the ſimilitude of ſound in the firſt two words.

Ore Arethuſa tuo ſiculis confunditur undis.

Rythmus, or number, is certainly eſſential to verſe, whether in the dead or living languages; and the real difference between the two is this: the number in antient verſe relates to the feet, and in modern Poetry to the ſyllables; for to aſſert that modern Poetry has no feet, is a ridiculous abſurdity. The feet, that principally enter into the compoſition of Greek and Latin verſes, are either of two or three ſyllables: thoſe of two ſyllables are either both long, as the ſpondee; or both ſhort, as the pyrrhic; or one ſhort and the other long, as the iambic; or one long, and the other ſhort, as the trochee. Thoſe of three ſyllables are the dactyl, of one long and two ſhort ſyllables; the anapeſt, of two ſhort and one long; the tribrachium, of three ſhort; and the moloſſus, of three long.

From the different combinations of theſe feet, reſtricted to certain numbers, the antients formed their different kinds of verſes, ſuch as the hexameter

Digitized by Google

or heroic, diſtinguiſhed by ſix feet dactyls and ſpondees, the fifth being always a dactyl, and the laſt a ſpondee: *e. g.*

1 2 3 4 5 6
Principi-is obſ-ta, ſe-ro medi-cina pa-ratur.

The pentameter of five feet, dactyls and ſpondees, or of ſix, reckoning two cæſuras.

1 2 3 4 5 6
Cum mala per lon-gas invalu-ere mo-ras.

They had likewiſe the iambic of three ſorts, the dimeter, the trimeter, and the tetrameter, and all the different kinds of lyric verſe ſpecified in the odes of Sappho, Alcæus, Anacreon, and Horace. Each of theſe was diſtinguiſhed by the number, as well as by the ſpecies of their feet; ſo that they were doubly reſtricted. Now all the feet of the antient poetry are ſtill found in the verſification of living languages; for as cadence was regulated by the ear, it was impoſſible for a man to write melodious verſe without naturally falling into the uſe of ancient feet, though perhaps he neither knows their meaſure nor denomination. Thus Spenſer, Shakſpeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope, and all our Poets, abound with dactyls, ſpondees, trochees, anapeſts, &c. which they uſe indiſcriminately in all kinds of compoſition, whether Tragic, Epic, Paſtoral, or Ode, having in this particular greatly the advantage of the antients, who were reſtricted to particular kinds of feet in particular kinds of Verſe. If we then are confined with the fetters of what is called rhyme, they were reſtricted to particular ſpecies of feet; ſo that the advantages and diſadvantages are pretty equally balanced: but indeed the Engliſh are more free in this particular, than any other modern nation. They not

Digitized by Google

not only uſe Blank-verſe in Tragedy and the Epic, but even in Lyric Poetry. Milton's tranſlation of Horace's Ode to Pyrrha is univerſally known, and generally admired, in our opinion much above its merit. There is an Ode extant without Rhyme addreſſed to Evening by the late Mr. Collins much more beautiful; and Mr. Warton with ſome others has happily ſucceeded in divers occaſional pieces, that are free of this reſtraint: but the number in all of theſe depends upon the ſyllables, and not upon the feet, which are unlimited.

It is generally ſuppoſed that the genius of the Engliſh language will not admit of Greek or Latin meaſure: but this, we apprehend, is a miſtake owing to the prejudice of education. It is impoſſible that the ſame meaſure, compoſed of the ſame times, ſhould have a good effect upon the ear in one language, and a bad effect in another. The truth is, we have been accuſtomed from our infancy to the numbers of Engliſh Poetry, and the very ſound and ſignification of the words diſpoſe the ear to receive them in a certain manner; ſo that its diſappointment muſt be attended with a diſagreeable ſenſation. In imbibing the firſt rudiments of education, we acquire, as it were, another ear for the numbers of Greek and Latin Poetry, and this being reſerved entirely for the ſounds and ſignifications of the words, that conſtitute thoſe dead languages, will not eaſily accommodate itſelf to the ſounds of our vernacular tongue, though conveyed in the ſame time and meaſure. In a word Latin and Greek have annexed to them the ideas of the antient meaſure, from which they are not eaſily disjoined. But we will venture to ſay, this difficulty might be ſurmounted by an effort of attention and a little practice; and in that caſe we ſhould in time be as well pleaſed with Engliſh as with Latin hexameters.

Sir

Digitized by Google

Sir Philip Sidney is ſaid to have miſcarried in his eſſays; but his miſcarriage was no more than that of failing in an attempt to introduce a new faſhion. The failure was not owing to any defect or imperfection in the ſcheme, but to the want of taſte, to the irreſolution and ignorance of the public. Without all doubt the antient meaſure, ſo different from that of modern Poetry, muſt have appeared remarkably uncouth to people in general, who were ignorant of the claſſics; and nothing but the countenance and perſeverance of the learned could reconcile them to the alteration. We have ſeen ſeveral late ſpecimens of Engliſh hexameters and ſapphics, ſo happily compoſed, that by attaching them to the idea of antient meaſure, we found them in all reſpects as melodious and agreeable to the ear, as the works of Virgil and Anacreon, or Horace.

Though the number of ſyllables diſtinguiſhes the nature of the Engliſh verſe from that of the Greek and Latin, it conſtitutes neither harmony, grace, nor expreſſion. Theſe muſt depend upon the choice of words, the ſeat of the accent, the pauſe, and the cadence. The accent, or tone, is underſtood to be an elevation or ſinking of the voice in reciting: the pauſe is a reſt, that divides the verſe into two parts, each of them called an hemiſtich. The pauſe and accent in Engliſh Poetry vary occaſionally, according to the meaning of the words; ſo that the hemiſtich does not always conſiſt of an equal number of ſyllables; and this variety is agreeable, as it prevents a dull repetition of regular ſtops, like thoſe in the French verſification, every line of which is divided by a pauſe exactly in the middle. The cadence comprehends that poetical ſtyle, which animates every line, that propriety, which gives ſtrength and expreſſion, that numeroſity, which renders the verſe ſmooth, flowing, and harmonious, that ſignificancy,

Digitized by Google

nificancy, which marks the paſſions, and in many caſes makes the ſound an echo to the ſenſe. The Greek and Latin languages, in being copious and ductile, are ſuſceptible of a vaſt variety of cadences, which the living languages will not admit: and of theſe a reader of any ear will judge for himſelf.

ESSAY XIX.

A SCHOOL in the Polite Arts properly ſignifies that ſucceſſion of Artiſts, which has learned the principles of the art from ſome eminent maſter, either by hearing his leſſons, or ſtudying his works, and conſequently who imitate his manner either through deſign or from habit. Muſicians ſeem agreed in making only three principal ſchools in muſic; namely, the ſchool of Pergoleſe in Italy, of Lully in France, and of Handel in England; though ſome are for making Rameau the founder of a new ſchool, different from thoſe of the former, as he is the inventor of beauties peculiarly his own.

Without all doubt Pergoleſe's muſic deſerves the firſt rank: though excelling neither in variety of movements, number of parts, nor unexpected flights, yet he is univerſally allowed to be the muſical Raphael of Italy. This great maſter's principal art conſiſted in knowing how to excite our paſſions by ſounds, which ſeem frequently oppoſite to the paſſion they would expreſs: by ſlow ſolemn ſounds he is ſometimes known to throw us into all the rage of battle; and even by faſter movements he excites melancholy in every heart, that ſounds are capable of affecting. This is a talent, which ſeems born with the

Digitized by Google

the artiſt? We are unable to tell why ſuch ſounds affect us: they ſeem no way imitative of the paſſion they would expreſs, but operate upon us by an inexpreſſible ſympathy; the original of which is as inſcrutable as the ſecret ſprings of life itſelf. To this excellence he adds another, in which he is ſuperior to every other artiſt of the profeſſion, the happy tranſition from one paſſion to another. No dramatic poet better knows to prepare his incidents than he: the audience are pleaſed in thoſe intervals of paſſion with the delicate, the ſimple harmony, if I may ſo expreſs it, in which the parts are all thrown into fugues, or often are barely uniſon. His melodies alſo, where no paſſion is expreſſed, give equal pleaſure from this delicate ſimplicity: and I need only inſtance that ſong in the *Serva Padrona*, which begins *Lo conoſco a quegl' occelli*, as one of the fineſt inſtances of excellence in the duo.

The Italian artiſts in general have followed his manner, yet ſeem fond of embelliſhing the delicate ſimplicity of the original. Their ſtyle in muſic ſeems ſomewhat to reſemble that of Seneca in writing, where there are ſome beautiful ſtarts of thought; but the whole is filled with ſtudied elegance and unaffecting affectation.

Lully in France firſt attempted the improvement of their muſic, which in general reſembled that of our old ſolemn chaunts in churches. It is worthy of remark in general, that the muſic of every country is ſolemn in proportion as the inhabitants are merry; or, in other words, the merrieſt ſprightlieſt nations are remarked for having the ſloweſt muſic; and thoſe, whoſe character it is to be melancholy, are pleaſed with the moſt briſk and airy movements. Thus in France, Poland, Ireland, and Switzerland, the national muſic is ſlow, melancholy, and ſolemn; in Italy, England, Spain, and Germany, it is faſter, propor-

Digitized by Google

proportionably as the people are grave. Lully only changed a bad manner, which he found, for a bad one of his own. His drowſy pieces are played ſtill to the moſt ſprightly audience that can be conceived; and even though Rameau, who is at once a muſician and a philoſopher, has ſhown both by precept and example, what improvements French muſic may ſtill admit of, yet his countrymen ſeem little convinced by his reaſonings; and the Pont-neuf taſte, as it is called, ſtill prevails in their beſt performances.

The Engliſh ſchool was firſt planned by Purcel: he attempted to unite the Italian manner, that prevailed in his time, with the antient Celtic carol and the Scotch ballad, which probably had alſo its origin in Italy; for ſome of the beſt Scotch ballads ("The Broom of Cowdenknows," for inſtance) are ſtill aſcribed to David Rizzio. But be that as it will, his manner was ſomething peculiar to the Engliſh; and he might have continued as head of the Engliſh ſchool, had not his merits been entirely eclipſed by Handel. Handel, though originally a German, yet adopted the Engliſh manner: he had long laboured to pleaſe by Italian compoſition, but without ſucceſs; and though his Engliſh Oratorios are accounted inimitable, yet his Italian Operas are fallen into oblivion. Pergoleſe excelled in paſſionate ſimplicity; Lully was remarkable for creating a new ſpecies of muſic, where all is elegant, but nothing paſſionate or ſublime: Handel's true characteriſtic is ſublimity: he has employed all the variety of ſounds and parts in all his pieces: the performances of the reſt may be pleaſing, though executed by few performers; his require the full band. The attention is awakened, the ſoul is rouſed up at his pieces; but diſtinct paſſion is ſeldom expreſſed. In this particular he has ſeldom

Digitized by Google

ſeldom found ſucceſs: he has been obliged, in order to expreſs paſſion, to imitate words by ſounds, which though it gives the pleaſure which imitation always produces, yet it fails of exciting thoſe laſting affections, which it is in the power of ſounds to produce. In a word, no man ever underſtood harmony ſo well as he; but in melody he has been exceeded by ſeveral.

[The following OBJECTIONS to the preceding ESSAY having been addreſſed to Dr. SMOLLETT (as EDITOR of the BRITISH MAGAZINE, in which it firſt appeared); that Gentleman, with equal candour and politeneſs, communicated the MS. to Dr. GOLDSMITH, who returned his ANSWERS to the OBJECTOR in the NOTES annexed.—EDIT.]

PERMIT me to object againſt ſome things advanced in the paper on the ſubject of THE DIFFERENT SCHOOLS OF MUSICK. The author of this article ſeems too haſty in degrading the harmonious * Purcel from the head of the Engliſh School, to erect in his room a foreigner (Handel), who has

* Had the Objector ſaid *melodious* Purcel, it had teſtified at leaſt a greater acquaintance with muſic, and Purcel's peculiar excellence. Purcel in melody is frequently great: his ſong made in his laſt ſickneſs, called Roſy Bowers, is a fine inſtance of this; but in harmony he is far ſhort of the meaneſt of our modern compoſers, his fulleſt harmonies being exceedingly ſimple. His Opera of Prince Arthur, the words of which were Dryden's, is reckoned his fineſt piece. But what is that, in point of harmony, to what we every day hear from modern maſters? In ſhort, with reſpect to genius, Purcel had a fine one: he greatly improved an art but little known in England before his time; for this he deſerves our applauſe; but the preſent prevailing taſte in muſic is very different from what he left it, and who was the improver ſince his time we ſhall ſee by and by.

not

Digitized by Google

not yet formed any School *. The gentleman, when he comes to communicate his thoughts upon the different Schools of Painting, may as well place Rubens at the head of the Engliſh painters, becauſe he left ſome monuments of his art in England †. He ſays that Handel, though *originally* a German

* Handel may be ſaid as juſtly as any man, not Pergoleſe excepted, to have founded a new School of Muſic. When he firſt came into England his muſic was entirely Italian: he compoſed for the Opera; and though even then his pieces were liked, yet did they not meet with univerſal approbation. In thoſe he has too ſervilely imitated the modern vitiated Italian taſte, by placing what foreigners call the *point d'orgue* too cloſely and injudiciouſly. But in his Oratorios he is perfectly an original genius. In theſe, by ſteering between the manners of Italy and England, he has ſtruck out new harmonies, and formed a ſpecies of muſic different from all others. He has left ſome excellent and eminent ſcholars, particularly Worgan and Smith, who compoſe nearly in his manner; a manner as different from Purcel's as from that of modern Italy. Conſequently Handel may be placed at the head of the Engliſh ſchool.

† The Objector will not have Handel's ſchool to be called an Engliſh ſchool, becauſe he was a German. Handel in a great meaſure found in England thoſe eſſential differences, which characterize his muſic: we have already ſhown that he had them not upon his arrival. Had Rubens come over to England but moderately ſkilled in his art; had he learned here all his excellency in colouring, and correctneſs of deſigning; had he left ſeveral ſcholars excellent in his manner behind him; I ſhould not ſcruple to call the ſchool erected by him, the Engliſh ſchool of Painting. Not the country in which a man is born, but his peculiar ſtyle, either in painting or in muſic—that conſtitutes him of this or that ſchool. Thus Champagne, who painted in the manner of the French ſchool, is always placed among the painters of that ſchool, though he was born in Flanders, and ſhould conſequently, by the Objector's rule, be placed among the Flemiſh painters. Kneller is placed in the German ſchool, and Oſtade in the Dutch, though born in the ſame city. Primatice, who may be truly ſaid to have founded the Roman ſchool, was born in Bologna; though, if his country was to determine his ſchool, he ſhould have been placed in the Lombard. There might ſeveral other inſtances be produced; but theſe, it is hoped, will be ſufficient to prove that Handel, though a German, may be placed at the head of the Engliſh ſchool.

(as

(as moſt certainly he was, and continued ſo to his laſt breath), yet adopted the Engliſh manner *. Yes, to be ſure, juſt as much as Rubens the painter did. Your correſpondent, in the courſe of his diſcoveries, tells us beſides that ſome of the beſt Scotch ballads ("The Broom of Cowdenknows," for inſtance) are ſtill aſcribed to David Rizzio †. This Rizzio muſt have been a moſt original genius, or have poſſeſſed extraordinary imitative powers, to have come, ſo advanced in life as he did, from Italy, and ſtrike ſo far out of the common road of his own country's muſick.

* Handel was originally a German; but by a long continuance in England he might have been looked upon as naturalized to the country. I don't pretend to be a fine writer: however, if the gentleman diſlikes the expreſſion (although he muſt be convinced it is a common one), I wiſh it were mended.

† I ſaid that they were aſcribed to David Rizzio. That they are, the Objector need only look into Mr. Oſwald's Collection of Scotch Tunes, and he will there find not only The Broom of Cowdenknows, but alſo The Black Eagle, and ſeveral other of the beſt Scotch tunes aſcribed to him. Though this might be a ſufficient anſwer, yet I muſt be permitted to go farther, to tell the Objector the opinion of our beſt modern muſicians in this particular. It is the opinion of the melodious Geminiani, that we have in the dominions of Great Britain no original muſic, except the Iriſh; the Scotch and Engliſh being originally borrowed from the Italians. And that his opinion in this reſpect is juſt (for I would not be ſwayed merely by authorities), it is very reaſonable to ſuppoſe, firſt, from the conformity between the Scotch and antient Italian muſic. They, who compare the old French Vaudevilles, brought from Italy by Kinuccini with thoſe pieces aſcribed to David Rizzio, who was pretty nearly cotemporary with him, will find a ſtrong reſemblance, notwithſtanding the oppoſite characters of the two nations, which have preſerved thoſe pieces. When I would have them compared, I mean I would have their baſſes compared, by which the ſimilitude may be moſt exactly ſeen. Secondly, it is reaſonable from the antient muſic of the Scotch, which is ſtill preſerved in the Highlands, and which bears no reſemblance at all to the muſic of the Low-country. The highland tunes are ſung to Iriſh words, and flow entirely in the Iriſh manner. On the other hand, the Lowland muſic is always ſung to Engliſh words.

A

Digitized by Google

A mere fiddler *, a ſhallow coxcomb, a giddy, inſolent, worthleſs fellow, to compoſe ſuch pieces as nothing but genuine ſenſibility of mind, and an exquiſite feeling of thoſe paſſions, which animate only the fineſt ſouls, could dictate; and in a manner too ſo extravagantly diſtant from that, to which he had all his life been accuſtomed!—It is impoſſible. —He might indeed have had preſumption enough to add ſome flouriſhes to a few favourite airs, like a cobler of old plays, when he takes it upon him to mend Shakſpeare. So far he might go; but farther it is impoſſible for any one to believe, that has but juſt ear enough to diſtinguiſh between the Italian and Scotch muſic, and is diſpoſed to conſider the ſubject with the leaſt degree of attention.

March 18, 1760. S. R.

ESSAY XX.

THERE can be perhaps no greater entertainment than to compare the rude Celtic ſimplicity with modern refinement. Books however ſeem incapable of furniſhing the parallel; and to be acquainted

* David Rizzio was neither a mere fiddler, nor a ſhallow coxcomb, nor a worthleſs fellow, nor a ſtranger in Scotland. He had indeed been brought over from Piedmont, to be put at the head of a band of muſic, by King James V. one of the moſt elegant princes of his time, an exquiſite judge of muſic, as well as of poetry, architecture, and all the fine arts. Rizzio, at the time of his death, had been above twenty years in Scotland: he was ſecretary to the queen, and at the ſame time an agent from the pope; ſo that he could not be ſo obſcure as he has been repreſented.

Digitized by Google

with the antient manners of our own anceſtors, we ſhould endeavour to look for their remains in thoſe countries, which, being in ſome meaſure retired from an intercourſe with other nations, are ſtill untinctured with foreign refinement, language, or breeding.

The Iriſh will ſatisfy curioſity in this reſpect preferably to all other nations I have ſeen. They in ſeveral parts of that country ſtill adhere to their antient language, dreſs, furniture, and ſuperſtitions; ſeveral cuſtoms exiſt among them, that ſtill ſpeak their original; and in ſome reſpects Cæſar's deſcription of the Antient Britons is applicable to them.

Their bards, in particular, are ſtill held in great veneration among them: thoſe traditional heralds are invited to every funeral, in order to fill up the intervals of the howl with their ſongs and harps. In theſe they rehearſe the actions of the anceſtors of the deceaſed, bewail the bondage of their country under the Engliſh government, and generally conclude with adviſing the young men and maidens to make the beſt uſe of their time, for they will ſoon, for all their preſent bloom, be ſtretched under the table, like the dead body before them.

Of all the Bards this country ever produced, the laſt and the greateſt was CAROLAN THE BLIND. He was at once a poet, a muſician, a compoſer, and ſung his own verſes to his harp. The original natives never mention his name without rapture; both his poetry and muſic they have by heart; and even ſome of the Engliſh themſelves, who have been tranſplanted there, find his muſic extremely pleaſing. A ſong beginning "O Rourke's noble fare will "ne'er be forgot," tranſlated by Dean Swift, is of his compoſition; which, though perhaps by this means the beſt known of his pieces, is yet by no means the moſt deſerving. His ſongs in general may

Digitized by Google

may be compared to thoſe of Pindar, as they have frequently the ſame flights of imagination, and are compoſed (I don't ſay written, for he could not write), merely to flatter ſome man of fortune upon ſome excellence of the ſame kind. In theſe one man is praiſed for the excellence of his ſtable, as in Pindar, another for his hoſpitality, a third for the beauty of his wife and children, and a fourth for the antiquity of his family. Whenever any of the original natives of diſtinction were aſſembled at feaſting or revelling, Carolan was generally there, where he was always ready with his harp to celebrate their praiſes. He ſeemed by nature formed for his profeſſion; for as he was born blind, ſo alſo he was poſſeſſed of a moſt aſtoniſhing memory, and a facetious turn of thinking, which gave his entertainers infinite ſatisfaction. Being once at the houſe of an Iriſh nobleman, where there was a muſician preſent, who was eminent in the profeſſion, Carolan immediately challenged him to a trial of ſkill. To carry the jeſt forward, his Lordſhip perſuaded the muſician to accept the challenge, and he accordingly played over on his fiddle the fifth concerto of Vivaldi. Carolan, immediately taking his harp, played over the whole piece after him, without miſſing a note, though he had never heard it before; which produced ſome ſurprize: but their aſtoniſhment increaſed, when he aſſured them he could make a concerto in the ſame taſte himſelf, which he inſtantly compoſed, and that with ſuch ſpirit and elegance, that it may compare (for we have it ſtill) with the fineſt compoſitions of Italy.

His death was not more remarkable than his life. Homer was never more fond of a glaſs than he; he would drink whole pints of Uſquebaugh, and, as he uſed to think, without any ill conſequence. His intemperance however in this reſpect at length

Digitized by Google

brought on an incurable diſorder, and when juſt at the point of death, he called for a cup of his beloved liquor. Thoſe, who were ſtanding round him, ſurpriſed at the demand, endeavoured to perſuade him to the contrary; but he perſiſted, and, when the bowl was brought him, attempted to drink, but could not; wherefore, giving away the bowl, he obſerved with a ſmile, that it would be hard if two ſuch friends as he and the cup ſhould part at leaſt without kiſſing; and then expired.

ESSAY XXI.

OF all men, who form gay illuſions of diſtant happineſs, perhaps a Poet is the moſt ſanguine. Such is the ardour of his hopes, that they often are equal to actual enjoyment; and he feels more in expectance than actual fruition. I have often regarded a character of this kind with ſome degree of envy. A man poſſeſſed of ſuch warm imagination commands all nature, and arrogates poſſeſſions, of which the owner has a blunter reliſh. While life continues, the alluring proſpect lies before him; he travels in the purſuit with confidence, and reſigns it only with his laſt breath.

It is this happy confidence, which gives life its true reliſh, and keeps up our ſpirits amidſt every diſtreſs and diſappointment. How much leſs would be done, if a man knew how little he can do! How wretched a creature would he be, if he ſaw the end as well as the beginning of his projects! He would have nothing left but to ſit down in torpid deſpair, and exchange employment for actual calamity.

I was

Digitized by Google

I was led into this train of thinking upon lately viſiting * the beautiful Gardens of the late Mr. Shenſtone, who was himſelf a Poet, and poſſeſſed of that warm imagination, which made him ever foremoſt in the purſuit of flying happineſs. Could he but have forſeen the end of all his ſchemes, for whom he was improving, and what changes his deſigns were to undergo, he would have ſcarcely amuſed his innocent life with what, for ſeveral years employed him in a moſt harmleſs manner, and abridged his ſcanty fortune. As the progreſs of this Improvement is a true picture of ſublunary viciſſitude, I could not help calling up my imagination, which, while I walked penſively along, ſuggeſted the following Reverie.

As I was turning my back upon a beautiful piece of water enlivened with caſcades and rock-work, and entering a dark walk by which ran a prattling brook, the Genius of the place appeared before me, but more reſembling the God of Time, than him more peculiarly appointed to the care of Gardens. Inſtead of ſheers he bore a ſcythe; and he appeared rather with the implements of huſbandry, than thoſe of a modern gardener. Having remembered this place in its priſtine beauty, I could not help condoling with him on its preſent ruinous ſituation. I ſpoke to him of the many alterations, which had been made, and all for the worſe; of the many ſhades, which had been taken away, of the bowers, that were deſtroyed by neglect, and the hedge-rows, that were ſpoiled by clipping. The Genius with a ſigh received my condolement, and aſſured me, that he was equally a martyr to ignorance and taſte, to refinement and ruſticity. Seeing me deſirous of knowing farther, he went on:

* 1773.

Digitized by Google

"You see, in the place before you, the paternal "inheritance of a poet; and to a man content with "little fully sufficient for his subsistence: but a "strong imagination and a long acquaintance with "the rich are dangerous foes to contentment. Our "Poet, instead of sitting down to enjoy life, re- "solved to prepare for its future enjoyment; and set "about converting a place of profit into a scene of "pleasure. This he at first supposed could be ac- "complished at a small expence; and he was willing "for a while to stint his income, to have an oppor- "tunity of displaying his taste. The Improvement "in this manner went forward; one beauty attained "led him to wish for some other; but he still hoped "that every emendation would be the last. It was "now therefore found, that the Improvement ex- "ceeded the subsidy, that the place was grown too "large and too fine for the inhabitant. But that "pride which was once exhibited could not retire; "the Garden was made for the owner, and though "it was become unfit for him, he could not willingly "resign it to another. Thus the first idea of its "beauties contributing to the happiness of his life "was found unfaithful; so that, instead of looking "within for satisfaction, he began to think of "having recourse to the praises of those, who came "to visit his Improvement.

"In consequence of this hope, which now took "possession of his mind, the Gardens were opened "to the visits of every stranger; and the country "flocked round to walk, to criticise, to admire, "and to do mischief. He soon found, that the ad- "mirers of his taste left by no means such strong "marks of their applause, as the envious did of "their malignity. All the windows of his temples, "and the walls of his retreats, were impressed with "the characters of prophaneness, ignorance, and "obscenity;

Digitized by Google

" obſcenity; his hedges were broken, his ſtatues " and urns defaced, and his lawns worn bare. It " was now therefore neceſſary to ſhut up the Gar- " dens once more, and to deprive the Publick of " that happineſs, which had before ceaſed to be his " own.

" In this ſituation the Poet continued for a time " in the character of a jealous lover, fond of the " Beauty he keeps, but unable to ſupply the extra- " vagance of every demand. The Garden by this " time was completely grown and finiſhed; the " marks of art were covered up by the luxuriance " of nature; the winding walks were grown dark; " the brook aſſumed a natural ſylvage; and the " rocks were covered with moſs. Nothing now re- " mained but to enjoy the beauties of the place, " when the poor Poet died, and his Garden was " obliged to be ſold for the benefit of thoſe, who " had contributed to its embelliſhment.

" The beauties of the place had now for ſome " time been celebrated as well in proſe as in verſe; " and all men of taſte wiſhed for ſo envied a ſpot, " where every urn was marked with the Poet's pen- " cil, and every walk awakened genius and medi- " tation. The firſt purchaſer was one Mr. True- " penny, a button-maker, who was poſſeſſed of " three thouſand pounds, and was willing alſo to " be poſſeſſed of taſte and genius.

" As the Poet's ideas were for the natural wildneſs " of the landſcape, the button-maker's were for the " more regular production of art. He conceived " perhaps that as it is a beauty in a button to be " of a regular pattern, ſo the ſame regularity ought " to obtain in a landſcape. Be this as it will, he " employed the ſheers to ſome purpoſe; he clipped " up the hedges, cut down the gloomy walks, made

Digitized by Google

" viſtos upon the ſtables and hog-ſties, and ſhowed " his friends that a man of taſte ſhould always be " doing.

" The next candidate for taſte and genius was a " Captain of a ſhip, who bought the Garden becauſe " the former poſſeſſor could find nothing more to " mend; but unfortunately he had taſte too. His " great paſſion lay in building, in making Chineſe " temples and cage-work ſummer-houſes. As the " place before had an appearance of retirement and " inſpired meditation, he gave it a more peopled " air; every turning preſented a cottage, or ice-" houſe, or a temple; the Improvement was con-" verted into a little city, and it only wanted in-" habitants to give it the air of a village in the " Eaſt-Indies.

" In this manner, in leſs than ten years, the Im-" provement has gone through the hands of as " many proprietors, who were all willing to have " taſte, and to ſhow their taſte too. As the place " had received its beſt finiſhing from the hand of " the firſt poſſeſſor, ſo every innovator only lent a " hand to do miſchief. Thoſe parts, which were ob-" ſcure, have been enlightened; thoſe walks, which " led naturally, have been twiſted into ſerpentine " windings. The colour of the flowers of the field " is not more various than the variety of taſtes, that " have been employed here, and all in direct con-" tradiction to the original aim of the firſt improver. " Could the original poſſeſſor but revive, with what " a ſorrowful heart would he look upon his favourite " ſpot again! He would ſcarcely recollect a Dryad " or a Wood-nymph of his former acquaintance, " and might perhaps find himſelf as much a " ſtranger in his own plantation, as in the deſerts of " Siberia."

ESSAY

Digitized by Google

ESSAY XXII.

THE Theatre, like all other amuſements, has its faſhions and its prejudices; and when ſatiated with its excellence, mankind begin to miſtake change for improvement. For ſome years Tragedy was the reigning entertainment; but of late it has entirely given way to Comedy, and our beſt efforts are now exerted in theſe lighter kinds of compoſition. The pompous train, the ſwelling phraſe, and the unnatural rant, are diſplaced for that natural portrait of human folly and frailty, of which all are judges, becauſe all have ſat for the picture.

But as in deſcribing Nature it is preſented with a double face, either of mirth or ſadneſs, our modern writers find themſelves at a loſs which chiefly to copy from; and it is now debated, whether the exhibition of human diſtreſs is likely to afford the mind more entertainment than that of human abſurdity?

Comedy is defined by Ariſtotle to be a picture of the frailties of the lower part of mankind, to diſtinguiſh it from Tragedy, which is an exhibition of the misfortunes of the great. When Comedy therefore aſcends to produce the characters of princes or generals upon the ſtage, it is out of its walk, ſince low life and middle life are entirely its object. The principal queſtion therefore is, whether in deſcribing low or middle life, an exhibition of its follies be not preferable to a detail of its calamities? Or, in other words, which deſerves the preference? The weeping ſentimental Comedy, ſo much in faſhion at preſent *, or the laughing and even low

* 1773.

Comedy,

Digitized by Google

Comedy, which ſeems to have been laſt exhibited by Vanbrugh and Cibber?

If we apply to authorities, all the great maſters in the dramatic art have but one opinion. Their rule is, that as Tragedy diſplays the calamities of the great; ſo Comedy ſhould excite our laughter, by ridiculouſly exhibiting the follies of the lower part of mankind. Boileau, one of the beſt modern Critics, aſſerts, that Comedy will not admit of Tragic Diſtreſs:

Le Comique, ennemi des ſoupirs et des pleurs,
N'admet point dans ſes vers de tragiques douleurs.

Nor is this rule without the ſtrongeſt foundation in Nature, as the diſtreſſes of the mean by no means affect us ſo ſtrongly as the calamities of the great. When Tragedy exhibits to us ſome great man fallen from his height, and ſtruggling with want and adverſity, we feel his ſituation in the ſame manner as we ſuppoſe he himſelf muſt feel, and our pity is increaſed in proportion to the height from which he fell. On the contrary, we do not ſo ſtrongly ſympathize with one born in humbler circumſtances, and encountering accidental diſtreſs: ſo that while we melt for Belifarius, we ſcarcely give halfpence to the beggar, who accoſts us in the ſtreet. The one has our pity; the other our contempt. Diſtreſs therefore is the proper object of Tragedy, ſince the great excite our pity by their fall; but not equally ſo of Comedy, ſince the actors employed in it are originally ſo mean, that they ſink but little by their fall.

Since the firſt origin of the ſtage, Tragedy and Comedy have run in diſtinct channels, and never till of late encroached upon the provinces of each other. Terence, who ſeems to have made the neareſt approaches, always judiciouſly ſtops ſhort before he comes

Digitized by Google

comes to the downright pathetic; and yet he is even reproached by Cæsar for wanting the *Vis Comica*. All the other comic writers of antiquity aim only at rendering Folly or Vice ridiculous, but never exalt their characters into buskined pomp, or make what Voltaire humourously calls *a Tradesman's Tragedy*.

Yet notwithstanding this weight of authority, and the universal practice of former ages, a new species of dramatic composition has been introduced under the name of *Sentimental* Comedy, in which the virtues of private life are exhibited, rather than the vices exposed; and the distresses rather than the faults of mankind make our interest in the piece. These Comedies have had of late great success, perhaps from their novelty, and also from their flattering every man in his favourite foible. In these plays almost all the characters are good, and exceedingly generous; they are lavish enough of their *Tin* money on the Stage; and though they want humour, have abundance of sentiment and feeling. If they happen to have faults or foibles, the spectator is taught not only to pardon, but to applaud them, in consideration of the goodness of their hearts; so that Folly, instead of being ridiculed, is commended, and the Comedy aims at touching our passions without the power of being truly pathetic. In this manner we are likely to lose one great source of entertainment on the Stage; for while the Comic Poet is invading the province of the Tragic Muse, he leaves her lovely Sister quite neglected. Of this however he is no way solicitous, as he measures his fame by his profits.

But it will be said, that the Theatre is formed to amuse mankind, and that it matters little, if this end be answered, by what means it is obtained. If mankind find delight in weeping at Comedy, it would

Digitized by Google

would be cruel to abridge them in that or any other innocent pleaſure. If thoſe pieces are denied the name of Comedies, yet call them by any other name, and if they are delightful, they are good. Their ſucceſs, it will be ſaid, is a mark of their merit, and it is only abridging our happineſs to deny us an inlet to Amuſement.

Theſe objections however are rather ſpecious than ſolid. It is true, that Amuſement is a great object of the Theatre; and it will be allowed, that theſe Sentimental Pieces do often amuſe us: but the queſtion is, whether the True Comedy would not amuſe us more? The queſtion is, whether a character ſupported throughout a piece with its ridicule ſtill attending, would not give us more delight than this ſpecies of baſtard Tragedy, which only is applauded becauſe it is new?

A friend of mine, who was ſitting unmoved at one of theſe Sentimental Pieces, was aſked how he could be ſo indifferent. "Why, truly," ſays he, "as the Hero is but a Tradeſman, it is indifferent "to me whether he be turned out of his counting-"houſe on Fiſh-ſtreet Hill, ſince he will ſtill have "enough left to open ſhop in St. Giles's."

The other objection is as ill-grounded; for though we ſhould give theſe pieces another name, it will not mend their efficacy. It will continue a kind of *muliſh* production, with all the defects of its oppoſite parents, and marked with ſterility. If we are permitted to make Comedy weep, we have an equal right to make Tragedy laugh, and to ſet down in blank verſe the jeſts and repartees of all the attendants in a funeral proceſſion.

But there is one argument in favour of Sentimental Comedy which will keep it on the ſtage, in ſpite of all that can be ſaid againſt it. It is of all others the moſt eaſily written. Thoſe abilities, that can hammer

Digitized by Google

hammer out a novel, are fully ſufficient for the production of a Sentimental Comedy. It is only ſufficient to raiſe the characters a little; to deck out the hero with a ribband, or give the heroine a Title; then to put an inſipid dialogue, without character or humour, into their mouths, give them mighty good hearts, very fine cloaths, furniſh a new ſet of ſcenes, make a pathetic ſcene or two, with a ſprinkling of tender melancholy converſation through the whole, and there is no doubt but all the ladies will cry, and all the gentlemen applaud.

Humour at preſent ſeems to be departing from the ſtage; and it will ſoon happen that our comic players will have nothing left for it but a fine coat and a ſong. It depends upon the audience, whether they will actually drive thoſe poor merry creatures from the ſtage, or ſit at a play as gloomy as at the tabernacle. It is not eaſy to recover an art when once loſt; and it will be but a juſt puniſhment, that when, by our being too faſtidious, we have baniſhed humour from the ſtage, we ſhould ourſelves be deprived of the art of laughing.

ESSAY XXIII.

AS I ſee you are fond of gallantry, and ſeem willing to ſet young people together as ſoon as you can, I cannot help lending my aſſiſtance to your endeavours, as I am greatly concerned in the attempt. You muſt know, Sir, that I am landlady of one of the moſt noted inns on the road to Scotland, and have ſeldom leſs than eight or ten couples a-week, who go down rapturous lovers, and return man and wife.

If

Digitized by Google

If there be in this world an agreeable ſituation, it muſt be that, in which a young couple find themſelves, when juſt let looſe from confinement, and whirling off to the Land of Promiſe. When the poſt-chaiſe is driving off, and the blinds are drawn up, ſure nothing can equal it. And yet, I do not know how, what with the fears of being purſued, or the wiſhes for greater happineſs, not one of my cuſtomers but ſeems gloomy and out of temper. The gentlemen are all ſullen, and the ladies diſcontented.

But if it be ſo going down, how is it with them coming back? Having been for a fortnight together, they are then mighty good company to be ſure. It is then the young lady's indiſcretion ſtares her in the face, and the gentleman himſelf finds that much is to be done before the money comes in.

For my own part, ſir, I was married in the uſual way; all my friends were at the wedding; I was conducted with great ceremony from the table to the bed; and I do not find that it any ways diminiſhed my happineſs with my huſband, while, poor man, he continued with me. For my part I am entirely for doing things in the old family way; I hate your new-faſhioned manners, and never loved an outlandiſh marriage in my life.

As I have had numbers call at my houſe, you may be ſure I was not idle in enquiring who they were, and how they did in the world after they left me. I cannot ſay that I ever heard much good come of them; and of an hiſtory of twenty-five, that I noted down in my ledger, I do not know a ſingle couple, that would not have been full as happy if they had gone the plain way to work, and aſked the conſent of their parents. To convince you of it, I will mention the names of a few, and refer the reſt to ſome fitter opportunity.

Imprimis, Miſs Jenny Haſtings went down to Scotland with a tailor, who to be ſure for a tailor

Digitized by Google

for was a very agreeable ſort of a man. But I do not know how, he did not take proper meaſure of the young lady's diſpoſition: they quarrelled at my houſe on their return; ſo ſhe left him for a cornet of dragoons, and he went back to his ſhop-board.

Miſs Rachel Runfort went off with a grenadier. They ſpent all their money going down; ſo that he carried her down in a poſt-chaiſe, and coming back ſhe helped to carry his knapſack.

Miſs Racket went down with her lover in their own phaeton; but upon their return, being very fond of driving, ſhe would be every now and then for holding the whip. This bred a diſpute; and before they were a fortnight together, ſhe felt that he could exerciſe the whip on ſomebody elſe beſides the horſes.

Miſs Meekly, though all compliance to the will of her lover, could never reconcile him to the change of his ſituation. It ſeems, he married her ſuppoſing ſhe had a large fortune; but being deceived in their expectations, they parted: and they now keep ſeparate garrets in Roſemary-lane.

The next couple, of whom I have any account, actually lived together in great harmony and uncloying kindneſs for no leſs than a month; but the lady, who was a little in years, having parted with her fortune to her deareſt life, he left her to make love to that better part of her which he valued more.

The next pair conſiſted of an Iriſh fortune-hunter, and one of the prettieſt modeſteſt ladies that ever my eyes beheld. As he was a well-looking gentleman all dreſt in lace, and as ſhe ſeemed very fond of him, I thought they were bleſt for life. Yet I was quickly miſtaken. The lady was no better than a common woman of the town, and he was no better than a ſharper; ſo they agreed upon a mutual divorce: he now dreſſes at the York Ball, and ſhe is

in

Digitized by Google

in keeping by the member for our Borough in Parliament.

In this manner, we ſee that all thoſe marriages, in which there is intereſt on one ſide and diſobedience on the other, are not likely to promiſe a long harveſt of delights. If our fortune-hunting gentlemen would but ſpeak out, the young lady, inſtead of a lover, would often find a ſneaking rogue, that only wanted the lady's purſe, and not her heart. For my own part, I never ſaw any thing but deſign and falſehood in every one of them; and my blood has boiled in my veins, when I ſaw a young fellow of twenty kneeling at the feet of a twenty thouſand pounder, profeſſing his paſſion, while he was taking aim at her money. I do not deny but there may be love in a Scotch marriage, but it is generally all on one ſide.

Of all the ſincere admirers I ever knew, a man of my acquaintance, who however did not run away with his miſtreſs to Scotland, was the moſt ſo. An old exciſeman of our town, who, as you may gueſs, was not very rich, had a daughter, who, as you ſhall ſee, was not very handſome. It was the opinion of every body, that this young woman would not ſoon be married, as ſhe wanted two main articles, beauty and fortune. But for all this a very well-looking man, that happened to be travelling thoſe parts, came and aſked the exciſeman for his daughter in marriage. The exciſeman, willing to deal openly by him, aſked if he had ſeen the girl; "for," ſays he, "ſhe is humpbacked." "Very "well," cried the ſtranger, "that will do for me." "Aye," ſays the exciſeman, "but my daughter is "as brown as a berry." "So much the better," cried the ſtranger; "ſuch ſkins wear well." "But "ſhe is bandy legg'd," ſays the exciſeman. "No "matter," cries the other; "her petticoats will hide "that

"that defect." "But then she is very poor, and "wants an eye." "Your description delights me," cries the stranger: "I have been looking out for "one of her make; for I keep an exhibition of wild "beasts, and intend to show her off for a Chim-"panzee."

ESSAY XXIV.

MANKIND have ever been prone to expatiate in the praise of human nature. The dignity of man is a subject, that has always been the favourite theme of humanity; they have declaimed with that ostentation, which usually accompanies such as are sure of having a partial audience; they have obtained victories, because there were none to oppose. Yet from all I have ever read or seen, men appear more apt to err by having too high, than by having too despicable, an opinion of their nature; and by attempting to exalt their original place in the creation, depress their real value in society.

The most ignorant nations have always been found to think most highly of themselves. The Deity has ever been thought peculiarly concerned in their glory and preservation; to have fought their battles, and inspired their teachers: their wizards are said to be familiar with heaven; and every hero has a guard of angels as well as men to attend him. When the Portuguese first came among the wretched inhabitants of the coast of Africa, these savage nations readily allowed the strangers more skill in navigation and war; yet still considered them at best but as useful servants, brought to their coast, by their guar-

Digitized by Google

dian Serpent, to ſupply them with luxuries they could have lived without. Though they could grant the Portugueſe more riches, they could never allow them to have ſuch a king as their Tottimondelem, who wore a bracelet of ſhells round his neck, and whoſe legs were covered with ivory.

In this manner examine a ſavage in the hiſtory of his country and predeceſſors; you ever find his warriors able to conquer armies, and his ſages acquainted with more than poſſible knowledge: human nature is to him an unknown country: he thinks it capable of great things, becauſe he is ignorant of its boundaries; whatever can be conceived to be done he allows to be poſſible, and whatever is poſſible he conjectures muſt have been done. He never meaſures the actions and powers of others by what himſelf is able to perform, nor makes a proper eſtimate of the greatneſs of his fellows, by bringing it to the ſtandard of his own capacity. He is ſatisfied to be one of a country where mighty things have been; and imagines the fancied power of others reflects a luſtre on himſelf. Thus by degrees he loſes the idea of his own inſignificance in a confuſed notion of the extraordinary powers of humanity, and is willing to grant extraordinary gifts to every pretender, becauſe unacquainted with their claims.

This is the reaſon, why demi-gods and heroes have ever been erected in times or countries of ignorance and barbarity: they addreſſed a people, who had high opinions of human nature, becauſe they were ignorant how far it could extend; they addreſſed a people, who were willing to allow that men ſhould be gods, becauſe they were yet imperfectly acquainted with God and with man. Theſe impoſtors knew, that all men are naturally fond of ſeeing ſomething very great made from the little materials of humanity; that ignorant nations are not more proud

of

Digitized by Google

of building a tower to reach heaven, or a pyramid to last for ages, than of raising up a demi-god of their own country and creation. The same pride, that erects a colossus or a pyramid, instals a god or an hero: but though the adoring savage can raise his colossus to the clouds, he can exalt the hero not one inch above the standard of humanity; incapable therefore of exalting the idol, he debases himself, and falls prostrate before him.

When man has thus acquired an erroneous idea of the dignity of his species, he and the gods become perfectly intimate; men are but angels, angels are but men, nay but servants that stand in waiting to execute human commands. The Persians, for instance, thus address their prophet Haly: "I salute "thee, glorious Creator, of whom the sun is but the "shadow. Master-piece of the lord of human crea-"tures, great star of justice and religion, the sea is "not rich and liberal, but by the gifts of thy mu-"nificent hands. The angel treasurer of heaven "reaps his harvest in the fertile gardens of the purity "of thy nature. The *primum mobile* would never "dart the ball of the sun through the trunk of hea-"ven, were it not to serve the morning out of the "extreme love she has for thee. The angel Gabriel, "messenger of truth, every day kisses the groundsel "of thy gate. Were there a place more exalted "than the most high throne of God, I would affirm "it to be thy place, O master of the faithful! Ga-"briel, with all his art and knowledge, is but a mere "scholar to thee." Thus, my friend, men think proper to treat angels; but if indeed there be such an order of beings, with what a degree of satirical contempt must they listen to the songs of little mortals, thus flattering each other! thus to see creatures, wiser indeed than the monkey, and more active than the oyster, claiming to themselves a mastery of heaven!

Digitized by Google

ven! minims, the tenants of an atom, thus arrogating a partnership in the creation of universal nature! surely heaven is kind that launches no thunder at those guilty heads: but it is kind, and regards their follies with pity, nor will destroy creatures, that it loved into being.

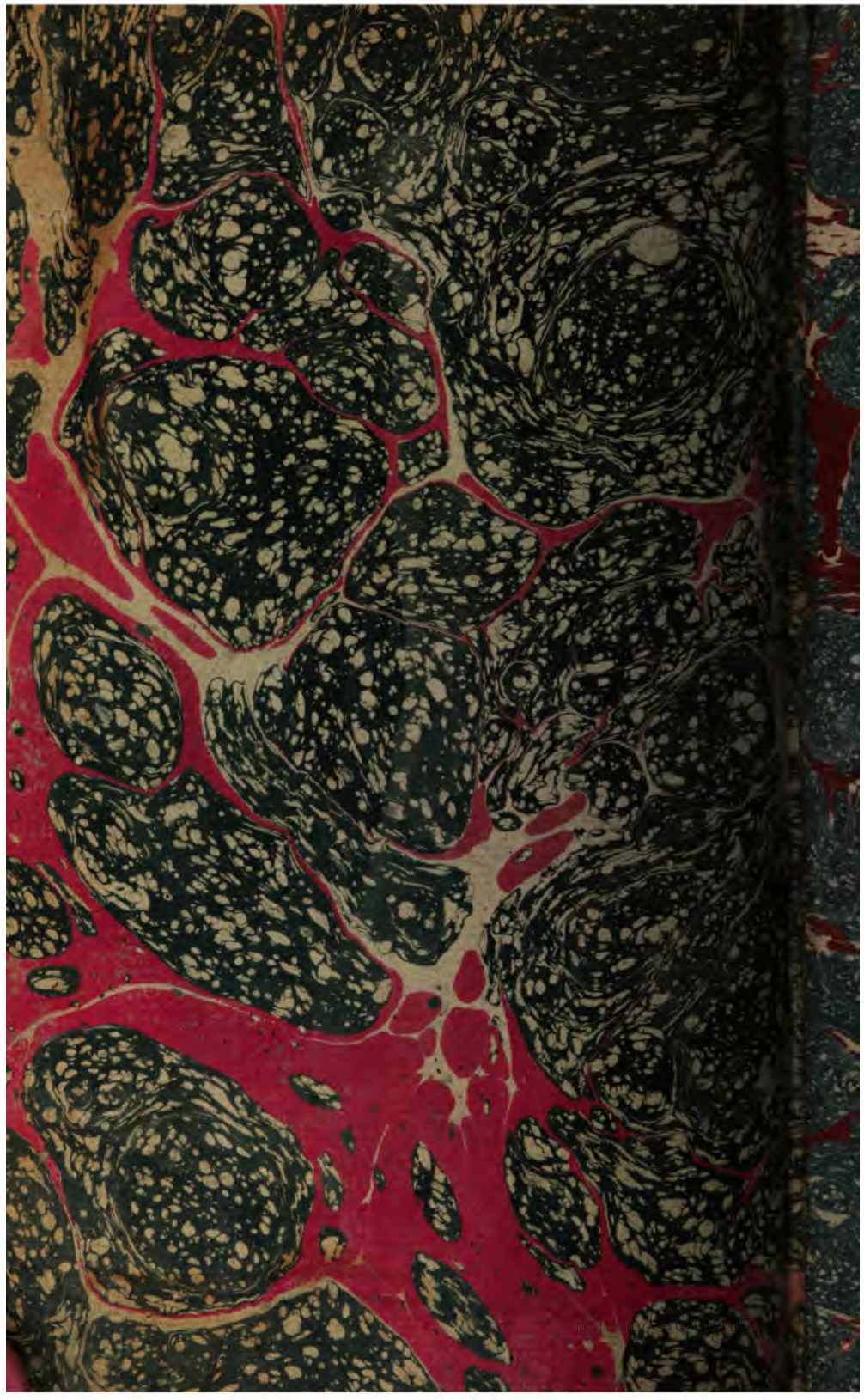
But whatever success this practice of making demi-gods might have been attended with in barbarous nations, I do not know that any man became a god in a country where the inhabitants were refined. Such countries generally have too close an inspection into human weakness, to think it invested with celestial power. They sometimes indeed admit the gods of strangers, or of their ancestors, who had their existence in times of obscurity; their weakness being forgotten, while nothing but their power and their miracles were remembered. The Chinese, for instance, never had a god of their own country; the idols, which the vulgar worship at this day, were brought from the barbarous nations around them. The Roman Emperors, who pretended to divinity, were generally taught by a poignard that they were mortal; and Alexander, though he passed among barbarous countries for a real god, could never persuade his polite countrymen into a similitude of thinking. The Lacedæmonians shrewdly complied with his commands by the following sarcastic edict: Εἰ Ἀλέξανδρος βέλεται εἶναι Θεὸς, Θεὸς ἔστω.

THE END.

Printed by Nichols and Son, Red-Lion Passage, Fleet-Street.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google